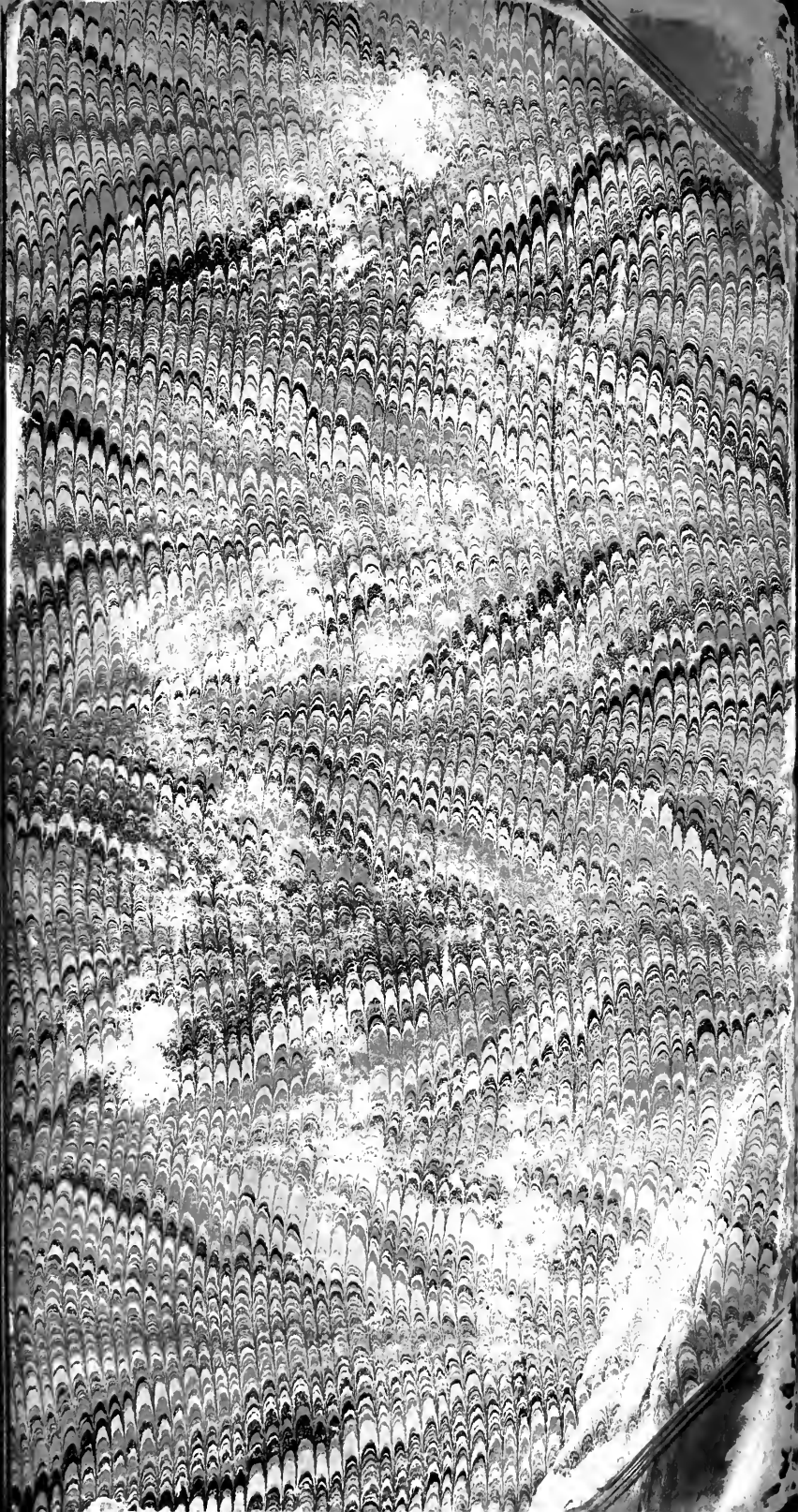


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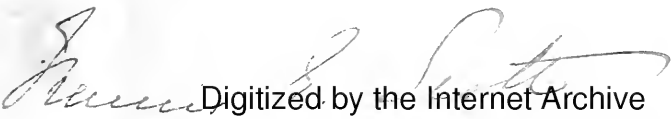
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Geo. Canning

*White
Speeches: No*

SPEECHES

OF THE

RIGHT HON. GEORGE CANNING

DELIVERED ON

PUBLIC OCCASIONS

IN

LIVERPOOL.

WITH A PORTRAIT OF MR. CANNING.

UNIV. OF CALIFORNIA
AT LOS ANGELES

LIVERPOOL:

THOS. KAYE, 45, CASTLE-STREET.

PUBLISHED BY BALDWIN, CRADOCK, AND JOY, LONDON.

1825.

ANNUAL REPORT
2014

2014

THESE

SPEECHES,

DELIVERED BY

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE GEORGE CANNING

DURING

HIS FOUR SUCCESSIVE ELECTIONS FOR THIS BOROUGH

AND ON OTHER PUBLIC OCCASIONS

IN LIVERPOOL,

ARE VERY RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED TO

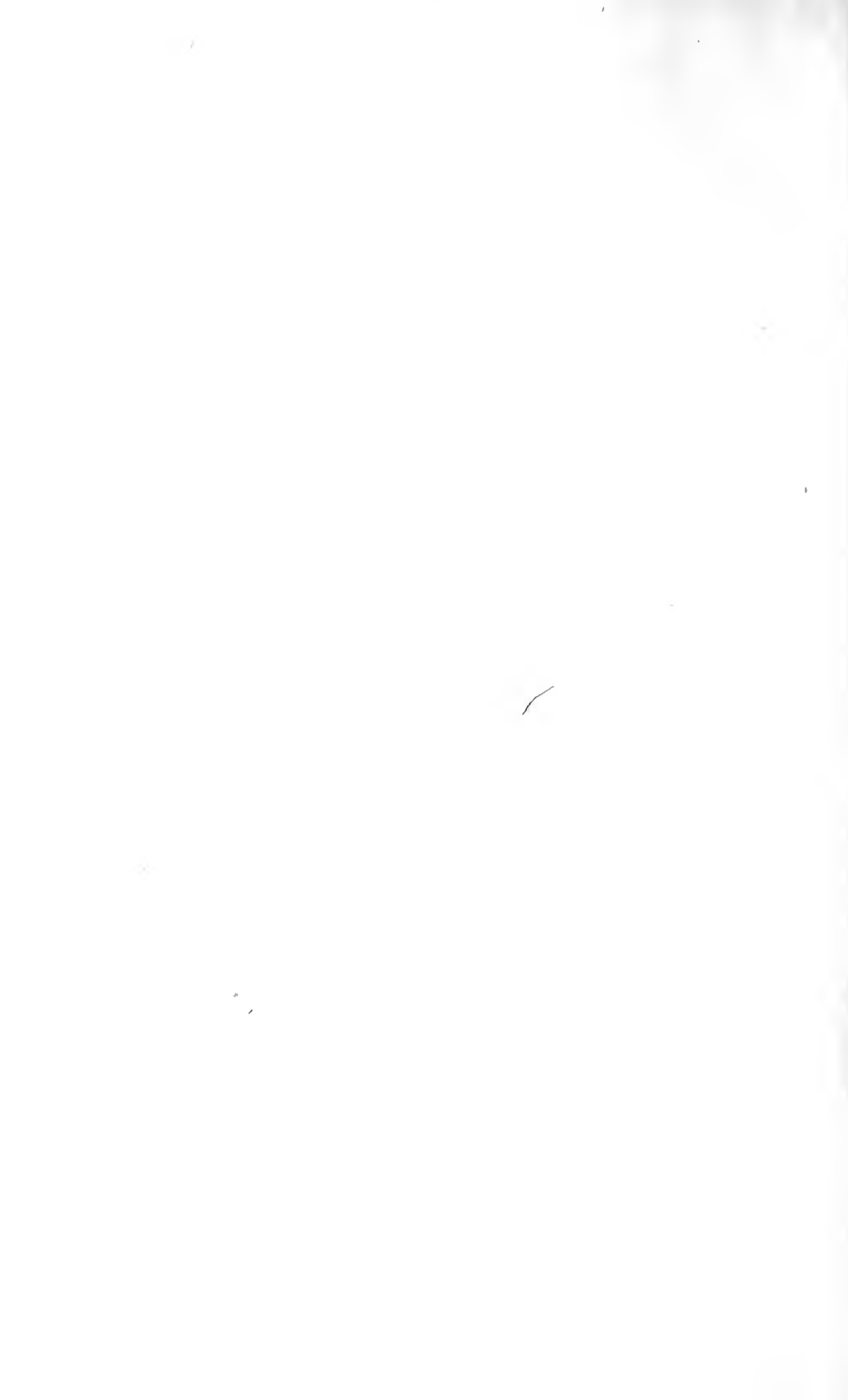
HIS FRIENDS,

FREEMEN AND INHABITANTS OF THE TOWN,

BY THEIR OBLIGED

AND OBEDIENT SERVANT,

THOS. KAYE.



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INTRODUCTION.

IN the following pages are collected all the Speeches delivered by the Right Honourable George Canning, at the successive elections which placed him in the representation of this borough, from the year 1812, and on several occasions arising out of that connexion. They were taken down in shorthand at the period of delivery, and have had the advantage of Mr. Canning's subsequent revisal and correction. They are given in the order of time; and at once embody a history of those contests which, though local, excited a very extensive interest; and present eminent examples of the manly and eloquent discussion of those questions of deep and public concern which,

in a free state and among a free people, will always command the attention of the community in general.

The ardour with which Mr. Canning's first election was carried was a public homage, rendered by the inhabitants of this great commercial town, to the leading principles of that distinguished statesman, and to the talents by which, in various difficulties and critical periods of the state, he had advocated them; but the increased attachment of his constituents, which was manifested as often as a new appeal was made to their suffrages, and on every other occasion on which he appeared among them, was produced by that *personal* esteem which the manly avowal of his opinions, the courtesy of his intercourse, and his unwearied application to the interests of the town, drew from all ranks, and from the moderate and respectable of all parties.

Independent of the fame which these speeches, called forth by Mr. Canning's connexion with this borough, have added to his character, as an orator and a statesman, no representative of any place ever retired from his station with more gratifying and marked proofs of confidence and affection.

He had, at first, to plunge into the full tide of party conflict; and, during successive elections, the excited state of the political combatants, and the frequent pressure of public affairs upon particular interests, tended little to encourage the exercise of candid and liberal sentiments: yet, even in these circumstances, the influence of his honourable conduct triumphed over the rugged and boisterous feelings of party; and his services were not suffered to terminate before he secured, in the address presented to him, at his farewell visit, by “the unanimous votes of all the mercantile associations of the great commercial community,” embracing many persons of political opinions very different from his own, the most marked and flattering acknowledgments of his “attention, kindness, impartiality, and exertions in the promotion of every object in which the character and prosperity of his constituents had been involved.”

A few words may be necessary to explain the state of our local parties, at the time of Mr. Canning's introduction among us.

Liverpool has always had to boast a majority of intelligent persons, in its best and most respectable circles, whose patriotism remained firm amidst commercial pressures, and whose enlarged views of national policy were never made subservient to a partial and temporary interest. Firm supporters of that form and structure of government under which the nation has risen to eminence, they have had no respect for political theories; and, unshaken in their loyalty, they have ever presented a barrier against the factions which have aimed their insolent violence against the throne and the institutions of the country.

Of this loyal and influential class, the members for the borough, in their personal opinions, had long been the representatives. But a few constitutional whigs of the old school have ever been found among us; and the majority of the opposition party was composed of modern low-cast whigs, and of no inconsiderable number of persons whose tendency towards democracy was even still more violent and mischievous. What this party wanted in strength it usually endeavoured to supply by activity, and by insidious

and inflammatory appeals to the passions of the unwary and the disaffected. Divided on some particular questions, and in the latitude which they gave to others, they were, however, generally united in election contests; and, having *once*, by taking their opponents unawares, succeeded in securing the election of a member of their own choice, these combined parties assumed an attitude of confidence as lofty as though they had succeeded in effecting a revolution, in favour of their own opinions, in the sentiments of the town at large. Their triumph was of short duration; for, on the dismissal of “the Talents,” and the subsequent dissolution of Parliament, the party found, that they had before triumphed not over the *weakness*, but only over the *carelessness* of their opponents. The strength of the friends of the throne and the constitution was put forth, and success was easily secured. The defeated party, always happy in comforting themselves under disaster, sheltered themselves under the pretence, that the people had been misled by the “No Popery” cry; and they had also at hand an idle story of riot to account for their disappointment. The fact, however, was, that the opinions of the

town were then, and always had been, against them. Their leaders were either themselves willing to believe the contrary, or thought it politic to make their followers believe so. They, therefore, kept up a high tone at their public dinners, and held out the certainty of their being able to bring in *two* members of their own nominating, whenever the next election should take place. They appear, however, to have found a difficulty in obtaining candidates, and many names were occasionally mentioned. At length, Messrs. Brougham and Creevey were definitely fixed upon. As whigs, they were acceptable ~~to~~ to the *leaders* of the party; and, being ardent in their partisan character, they approached the views and wishes of the more violent of their followers. There were, also, some accidental circumstances much in favour of these candidates, and they were, on this account, better fitted to the purposes of their friends in Liverpool, who must have felt some fears as to their strength, and therefore made the best of the advantages which the candidates had acquired from an accidental popularity. Mr. Creevey had exerted himself in the question of a free trade to India; and his way had been

prepared in Liverpool by a pamphlet on the subject. Mr. Brougham had made himself the idol of the opponents of the Orders in Council, and the party which American interests had created in the town. With these auxiliaries a complete triumph was anticipated, and the party was flushed with confidence.

It was not probable, that this bold attempt to seize upon the entire representation would be submitted to; and the step taken to defeat it was one which did great credit to the judgment of those who proposed it. Mr. Canning was selected, and induced to offer himself. Never was triumph more complete. Around his standard were instantly assembled, not the retainers of ministers, not men under government influence and obligation, for he was not the ministerial member; but those *independent men* who, without any respect to the ministry of the day, cherished in their hearts principles of love to the sovereign, respect to the constitution, firmness in the national struggle in which we were then involved, and a high determination to support the country in every disaster, till it should win for itself such

a peace as the justice of its cause demanded and deserved.

The invitation to Mr. Canning was proposed at a meeting of gentlemen, held at the Golden Lion Inn, on the 25th September, 1812; and a resolution, moved by Mr. John Gladstone, and seconded by Mr. Ralph Benson, was passed accordingly. The following is the invitation :

LIVERPOOL, OCTOBER 1, 1812.

Entertaining, as we do, the highest respect for and the fullest confidence in your talents, integrity, and public conduct, we feel a strong and anxious desire that this loyal and ancient borough should possess the high advantage of being represented by you in Parliament; and we, therefore, do most earnestly invite you to offer yourself as a candidate at the ensuing election.

Should you favour us by your compliance, we beg to assure you of our utmost zeal and exertions in your behalf; and, from the knowledge we possess of the very favourable sentiments generally entertained of you by the freemen and other inhabitants of this large and populous borough, we cannot permit ourselves for a moment to doubt your being returned to Parliament by a large majority, notwithstanding any opposition that is or may be contemplated by others on the occasion.

With the greatest respect,

We have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your faithful and obedient Servants,

To this Mr. Canning replied :

MAMHEAD HOUSE, NEAR EXETER,
SUNDAY, OCTOBER 4, 1812.

GENTLEMEN,

In returning from a more distant part of the country, upon intelligence of the dissolution of Parliament, I am met here, this day, by your flattering invitation to Liverpool.

I have not words to express my sense of the honour thus tendered to me. It is one which, unconnected as I am with the town of Liverpool, I certainly should never have presumed to think of soliciting; nor can I forbear, even now, entreating you to reflect, whether any advantage or satisfaction which you can hope to derive from choosing me one of your representatives, can compensate the trouble which (I am led to apprehend) you may have to encounter in accomplishing that object.

Having said this, if it be, nevertheless, your pleasure to call me to that distinguished situation, my services are at your command. I put myself into your hands; relying confidently upon the exertions which you will employ to give effect to your own wishes, and to vindicate your choice by making it triumphantly successful.

Had I presumed, uninvited, to solicit your suffrages, it would have been incumbent upon me to address to you some profession of my public principles, and some exposition of my public conduct.

As it is, you allow me to flatter myself that to your indulgent and favourable construction of those principles and that conduct (by which alone I am known to you) I am indebted for the invitation which I have this day received from you.

I am not likely to swerve from principles which have procured to me so signal and so gratifying a distinction.

My conduct in Parliament will always be governed by the best judgment which I am able to form of what is conducive to the welfare or essential to the honour of the country.

I have only to add, that gratitude, as well as duty, will ensure

my unwearied attention to every thing that may affect the peculiar interests of the town of Liverpool, or which can contribute to its prosperity.

I have the honour to be,

With the highest respect and acknowledgment,

Gentlemen,

Your most obliged and faithful servant,

GEORGE CANNING.

Mr. Canning arrived in Liverpool late in the evening of the 7th October, 1812, and published the following letter to the freemen :

LIVERPOOL, WEDNESDAY NIGHT,

OCTOBER 7, 1812.

TO THE FREEMEN OF LIVERPOOL.

GENTLEMEN,

I had no sooner returned my acknowledgment of the very flattering invitation sent to me from Liverpool, than I felt it my duty to hasten hither for the purpose of paying my personal respects to the gentlemen by whom that invitation was signed and to you.

I regret that distance and accidents have delayed my arrival here to so late an hour; most especially when I learn with what extraordinary and cordial demonstration of kindness you were prepared to receive me this morning.

Finding, upon my arrival, the same unmerited partiality prevailing in my favour, which had dictated the requisition to me to offer myself as a candidate to represent this ancient and loyal town, I can no longer hesitate, in compliance with that requisition, to offer to the freemen at large my humble but zealous services; and to express to them the pride and satisfaction which I should feel in being honoured, by their suffrages, with the high trust to which I have been encouraged to aspire.

I have no claims, Gentlemen, upon your confidence from private connexion or acquaintance. And, I confess, I am not fond of extravagant professions; because, I think, it often happens, that when too much is professed at first, something is to be afterwards qualified, or explained, or retracted.

But my public life is before you: from that your judgment of me will naturally be formed. And I can confidently assure you, that, if you should think fit to honour me with your choice, you shall find me (according to the best of my ability) careful in watching over your peculiar concerns, and steadfast in maintaining those principles by which the prosperity of such a town as Liverpool is most surely to be upholden, connected as that prosperity must necessarily and inseparably be with the welfare and the honour of Great Britain.

I have the honour to be, with the highest respect,

Gentlemen,

Your most obedient and devoted servant,

GEORGE CANNING.

Before Mr. Canning's answer was received, a very active canvass had been instituted by the friends of Messrs. Brougham and Creevey; and it was pretended, that they had met with an encouragement decisive of success. On Monday, the 5th, Mr. Brougham made his public entry.

On Thursday morning Mr. Canning was escorted to the hustings by a very numerous and respectable assemblage of friends, amidst demonstrations of the most ardent enthusiasm. The unusual number of five candidates were then put in nomination; and the result of the first day's

poll gave, as to Mr. Canning, a pleasing earnest of ultimate success. The numbers, at the close of the day, were—Canning 139, Gascoyne 117, Brougham 137, Creevey 135, and Tarleton 5. The numbers on each day's poll, from the commencement to the close, are exhibited in the following view :

	1st Day.	2d Day.	3d Day.	4th Day.	5th Day.	6th Day.	7th Day.	8th Day.
CANNING	139	318	520	722	926	1,076	1,361	1,631
GASCOYNE ..	117	288	483	673	864	1,003	1,276	1,532
BROUGHAM ..	137	284	488	691	892	1,030	1,105	1,121
CREEVEY	135	277	473	666	866	991	1,055	1,068
TARLETON ..	5	5	6	6	6	6	6	11

Number of Freemen polled, 2,726.

The greatest number of freemen that ever polled in this borough on any former occasion was 2,415; so that the above number exceeds that of any former election by 311.

The contest was sharp and indecisive, except as to Mr. Canning, until the sixth day of the poll; and, to those who judged only from appearances, the result was considered doubtful. Persons of better information as to the state of opinion felt no fear; and they already anticipated the defeat of a party whose principles were even more objectionable than the arrogant air which marked all their

proceedings. On the seventh day the disparity became strongly marked ; and on Friday morning, October 16, being the eighth day of the contest, Messrs. Brougham and Creevey, despairing of success, very handsomely took leave of the returning officers at the hustings, and parted from the two successful candidates with expressions of politeness and personal regard, which were warmly returned by Mr. Canning and General Gascoyne. The poll was, however, kept open for the friends of the remaining candidates till five o'clock in the evening, and the contest closed, leaving a large majority in favour of the successful candidates, and crowning a zealous struggle, begun late, and under many disadvantages, with a victory which, had it been merely personal, would have lost its interest, but which will long be exultingly remembered as a triumph of constitutional and British principles.

The addresses delivered by Mr. Canning, on this occasion, excited great admiration ; and, by the sentiments avowed and defended in the more extended of them, as well as by the eloquence with which they were clothed, served to increase

greatly the zeal of his friends, not only for the successful, but for the triumphant issue of the contest. At every succeeding election and visit, he appeared, however, to rise, in all the attributes of eloquence, above his former efforts; to enlighten all the subjects which, at the time, agitated the minds of men with stronger illustration; and to fascinate his auditors with a spell of greater power. Of this the whole collection in this volume will be sufficient evidence; but, independent of the eloquence which at once animates and adorns them, they possess a claim upon public attention which arises from another consideration.

Mr. Canning is, so far as our recollection serves, the first British senator who has valued himself upon maintaining a constant intellectual intercourse with his constituents, and who has seized every opportunity of personally inculcating, with all the vigour of his commanding talents, those political opinions which he had invariably advocated, and with such splendid success, in the Commons' House of Parliament. We have, it is true, four election speeches of Mr. Burke, pronounced by that incomparable man during the

too brief period in which Bristol enjoyed the glory of calling him her representative. But those speeches, though abounding in every variety of oratorical excellence—argumentative, ingenious, playful, and impassioned—refer chiefly to the personal conduct of that illustrious statesman upon political questions which engrossed the fleeting anxiety of the day. It was, however, the privilege of Mr. Burke's genius to give the enduring impress of his wisdom to every transient topic which he touched. But Mr. Canning's fortune, as a public man, has been happier than that of Mr. Burke. Summoned by the majority of an enlightened community to become not only the constitutional guardian of their interests, but the accredited expounder of their political sentiments, Mr. Canning took occasion to vindicate the propriety of their choice by exhibiting the extent of his ability. Upon all the leading questions of our foreign and domestic policy, he submitted his opinions to his constituents, with a fairness and manly freedom which they knew how to appreciate. Placing a dignified confidence in his own practised and matured judgment, Mr. Canning shrunk from no subject, declined no controversy;

but fearlessly presented his political principles and conduct to the test of popular scrutiny. We cannot conceive a more decisive proof of that progress towards the practical perfection of our unrivalled institutions, which we love to contemplate, than such a connexion subsisting between the representative and those who honour him with their choice.

But in these addresses, except where they relate merely to the passing events of election contests, Mr. Canning is seen in a loftier position than that which connected him merely with his constituents. In confirming the political principles of his constituents, he confirmed those of the better part of the public at large; and in dissipating the sophistries of the demagogues of the day, and exposing, by the flashes of his penetrating intellect, the seductive theories by which many had been led astray from their veneration for the constitution of their ancestors, he furnished weapons to the well-minded in this contest of opinions throughout the country; and, by his arguments, has carried out, if we may so speak, those well-wrought and well-placed anchors, which, in future agitations, will hold fast the

vessel of the state. For his speeches, on parliamentary reform especially, the country at large, as well as Liverpool, has to be grateful ; and, long as solid and substantial wisdom is preferred to the floating conceits which fume up into weak and theoretic minds, and large and philosophical views are held superior to the expedients which the pressure of temporary national difficulties force upon the feeble, and to which the disaffected resort for purposes of public delusion, they will retain their influence, and will be found to have contributed no small share to the preservation of our invaluable institutions from the destructive innovations and pretended reforms of incompetent or designing men, and to their transmission, in strength and purity, to future ages. Mr. Canning has, in these productions of his powerful mind, greatly augmented the national stock of constitutional knowledge.

The facts stated above will be sufficiently introductory to the addresses delivered during the election of 1812: a few observations will be prefixed to each series of the speeches, tending to explain their temporary and local allusions.

Mr. Canning's style may be termed emphatically an *English* one, as contradistinguished from that florid and fanciful oratory which is of Irish and Gallic origin, and which abounds in violent metaphor, forced allusion, and tumid diction, in a greater degree than can be easily reconciled to the rigour of English taste. Mr. Canning's speeches are wholly free from these meretricious blandishments. They exhibit a large compass and a penetrating vigour of thought, with exquisite elegance of expression. The imagination of the orator is sufficiently exercised, but it is never abused. Mr. Canning also eminently excels in fitting his subject to the grasp of ordinary minds, whilst he calls forth the admiration of the most polished or the most philosophic auditor. He never exhausts himself in dissertation, but proceeds to a rapid and luminous exposition of the topics which he is desirous to enforce. His promptitude in detecting the most ingenious fallacy is inferior only to the polished ridicule with which he rebukes it. In that "prevailing art" by which the orator ingratiates himself into the affections of a popular assembly, Mr. Canning is confessedly without a rival. But, beyond all

the blandishments of Mr. Canning's eloquence, we prize the principles which that eloquence has ever been employed in propagating. To Mr. Canning, as the faithful follower of Mr. Pitt, the nation has yielded that confidence which is the meed of tried consistency and transcendent talents; and, though the connexion which gave rise to the following addresses may never be renewed, we are confident that we express the feelings of the majority of our fellow-townsmen, when we say, that that advocacy of right and truly British views among us, to which he so ably applied himself, will be always remembered, in Liverpool, with equal admiration and gratitude.



SPEECHES

DURING

THE ELECTION OF 1812.



SPEECHES, &c.

ON THE HUSTINGS, BEFORE THE OPENING OF THE POLL,
ON THE 8TH OF OCTOBER, 1812.

GENTLEMEN,

IN common with all the candidates who have addressed you, I disclaim all personal animosity in this contest, and trust that it will be conducted throughout with good humour and moderation on all sides. Like the gentleman* who has immediately preceded me, I beg to be considered as not presuming to put forward any personal pretensions to the high honour which has been tendered to me.

Having no natural connexion with this great and opulent town, I should certainly never have aspired, unsolicited, to so signal a distinction. I did, for some time, hesitate to accept the

* Mr. Brougham.

invitation proffered to me by so numerous, so respectable, and so enlightened a body of freemen. And, if I finally determined not to refuse it, I did so principally because I thought a refusal might have been considered as disrespectful to them, and would have been unjust to myself as a public man; disrespectful to them, inasmuch as it would have appeared to oppose my humble individual judgment to the flattering opinion which they are pleased to entertain of me as a fit person to represent you, and to the assurances of success which they held out to me as certain, through their kindness and your concurrence and support; and unjust to myself as a public man, because it might have been represented as indicating, that there was something in my political principles and conduct which shrunk from the test of popular investigation.

Whatever may be the event of the struggle, the exertions of all my worthy friends and supporters will stamp indelible gratitude on my heart. Should I be the object of your choice, of one thing I beg leave to assure you, that, whomever you may choose to be the companion of my success, even though the general public sentiments of my colleague should be at variance with my own, you may rely upon my co-operating with him, with all my heart, in every thing that can contribute to the interests and prosperity of Liverpool.

SPEECH

AT THE CLOSE OF THE SECOND DAY'S POLL, THE 9TH OF
OCTOBER, 1812.

GENTLEMEN, (or, what is, perhaps, an unusual
beginning of an election address, but
in this case peculiarly called for,)

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

I THANK you all most cordially for your kind,
active, and zealous support.

It may be some satisfaction to you to hear the
state of the day's poll. It is as follows: to General
Tarleton's numbers of yesterday nothing
has been added; Mr. Creevey's numbers are 277;
Mr. Brougham's, 284; General Gascoyne's, four
above those of Mr. Brougham; and I, Gentlemen,
have the good fortune to be maintained at the
head of the poll by an increased majority of thirty
over the highest of the other candidates. My
numbers are 318.

I told you yesterday, Gentlemen, that I hailed
the small majority of two as an omen of success.
The increase of that majority, on this day's poll,
affords a strong encouragement of the hopes then
expressed by me, and will infallibly lead to a
confirmation of them, if it does not lead to a

relaxation of your efforts in my behalf. If it does, the present flattering prospect may be not only delusive, but dangerous. It must, and will, undoubtedly, lead to increased activity on the part of my opponents; which, unless met and effectually counteracted by increased exertions on yours, might retard, though, I trust, from the assurances which I have received, that nothing can ultimately defeat, the accomplishment of your wishes. I will, therefore, detain you no longer from the active services of the evening; in which I must myself hasten to take my share, by paying my respects to as many as possible of those free-men whom the shortness of the time has prevented me from visiting.

One word only, Gentlemen, before we part. There were, I understand, some symptoms of disorder and violence last night, by whom begun, or how provoked, I know not, nor is it likely that a very correct account should be obtained of the proceedings of a moment of heat and irritation. But allow me earnestly, and most anxiously, to implore of you, one and all, that you will exert yourselves to discountenance and suppress any tendency to acts of personal insult or incivility. Gentlemen, there are but two things desirable in any undertaking—to be in the right, and to succeed. Of success, I trust, we cannot be very doubtful. Let us take care that we keep ourselves, throughout the whole of the struggle,

in the right. And now, Gentlemen, I take my leave of you for the evening, recommending your diligence and zeal to the guidance of the ladies, whose influence I know is with me, and will be all-powerful in my behalf.

SPEECH

AT THE CLOSE OF THE THIRD DAY'S POLL, THE 10TH OF
OCTOBER, 1812.

GENTLEMEN,

THE lateness of the hour to which the poll has been protracted has made your kindness in taking the trouble to accompany me home the more signal, but would make it in the same proportion the more unpardonable in me to add to your fatigue by detaining you here. I will therefore, Gentlemen, only in the first instance state to you the numbers of the poll, which remain, with one exception, in nearly the same proportion of majority as yesterday. Mr. Creevey, 473;

General Gascoyne, 481; Mr. Brougham, 488, having gained a majority of seven on General Gascoyne.

I remain where the kindness of my friends had placed me the day before, at the head of the poll, with a majority of about thirty above the highest of my competitors. My numbers are 519.

Gentlemen, from this state of the poll, and from all the information I have been able to collect, I believe this day to have been the pinch of the struggle. I do not mean to say that it is over; or that on Monday, or, perhaps, even the day following, the contest may not go on with almost equally balanced perseverance; but you will see, from that circumstance, how truly I stated to you yesterday, that the majority which I had been fortunate enough to obtain was sure to stimulate my antagonists, and will, I hope, serve as a stimulus to new efforts and proportionate energy on the part of my friends.

Gentlemen, do not suppose that I doubt your good-will; I have received already too many and too striking proofs of it. To-morrow is a day of cessation from the contest. I do not regret this, as you may very well conceive, so far as it affects myself, who really stand in need of some repose. Neither do I in another point of view regret it as at all unfriendly to my interest; for to-morrow will be spent by you, Gentlemen, in the bosom of

your families, and I know that I have in the house of every man of you the zeal and good wishes of a wife or a daughter: incentives which, if it were necessary, would rouse you to fresh and successful exertions in my behalf.

Gentlemen, I bid you good night, entreating you now to disperse in quiet and good order, and hoping to meet you here again on Monday, at a somewhat more seasonable hour, when I may be able to look you, as well as you me, in the face.

SPEECH

AT THE CLOSE OF THE FOURTH DAY'S POLL, THE 12TH OF
OCTOBER, 1812.

GENTLEMEN,

I PRESUME to suppose that the first thing which you expect of me is, that I should put you in possession of the present state of the poll.

In the course of the day, as I foresaw and foretold to you on Saturday, the struggle has

been continued with nearly equal vigour and perseverance on all sides. The numbers at the close of the poll this day are as follow :—Mr. Creevey, 666; General Gascoyne, 673; Mr. Brougham, (having improved in a small degree his majority over General Gascoyne,) 691: I stand with that trifling superiority which I had on Saturday, and which I hope to sustain unimpaired until the period shall arrive for pushing it forward to a commanding and conclusive majority,—about thirty over the highest of my competitors. My numbers are 722.

Gentlemen, it is not improbable, that yet another, and, perhaps, another day, we may march side by side, and step by step, without any material and decisive advantage; but the time cannot be distant when the forces of my opponents will be exhausted, and when the sense of this great town will be manifested in a manner not to be mistaken.

Gentlemen, I must be insensible indeed, if I did not feel most deeply the marks of kindness which you have been pleased to show me. I should be unworthy of the situation to which you have the intention of raising me, if I could consider it merely as a trust to be executed with fidelity, (though a most sacred trust it will be,) and were not, at the same time, to think of it, and feel it, as a testimony of good-will to be indelibly engraven on my heart. If, Gentlemen,

such marks of kindness had been experienced by one who had been born and bred amongst you ; who had entitled himself to the regard of his fellow-citizens by the daily intercourse of mutual good offices ; or who had, fortunately for himself, had the opportunity of deserving something at your hands for services previously rendered to you ; even to such a man, so situated, such proofs of friendship as you have bestowed upon me must have been gratifying beyond the ordinary lot of human gratification : but when I reflect, that these expressions of esteem and affection are lavished upon a stranger ; upon one who has neither served you, nor been known to you personally before ; who cannot boast of having earned your favour by any thing that is past, and can only look forward with hope that his future life may prove him not unworthy of your partiality, I confess I am absolutely overwhelmed by these reflections, and want words to express feelings which I have not the power to control.

But, Gentlemen, the circumstance of my not being personally known to you, as it enhances in one view my obligation to you, so does it simplify in another point of view and dignify our relation with each other. In calling upon me, as you have done, you could not be actuated by any personal partiality. It must be to my public principles and conduct that I am indebted for your selection of me as the individual to whom

your best interests might, according to your judgment, be most safely confided, and by whom your sentiments were likely to be most correctly represented.

Of Liverpool, Gentlemen, I knew nothing a week ago but by report: as a great and opulent town, deeply interested in the prosperity of the kingdom, and contributing largely to that prosperity by its own industry and enterprise. It is only since I came amongst you that I have had the opportunity of being convinced how worthy you are of the rank which you hold amongst the cities and towns of this great and flourishing land.

I have found, Gentlemen, generally prevailing among you, not, as by misrepresentation I had been taught to believe, a querulous impatience under the privations common to us all, and unhappily incident to a state of war such as that in which it is our misfortune to be engaged; not a disposition to separate the local and peculiar interests of Liverpool from those of the country at large, and to purchase a respite to yourselves at the expense of national interest and honour. No, Gentlemen; I have found here a lofty and determined spirit, patient under difficulties known to be unavoidable, and never looking to partial relief or benefit but as connected with the general good. Instead of unreasoning clamours for a peace to be attained by sacrifice and submission, I have found among you a disposition to

sustain your share of the evils of war, until it can be put an end to with safety, because without disgrace.

The habits of a commercial people are sober, cautious, and calculating, not prone to exaggeration and enthusiasm; and, as all human qualities have their accompanying and qualifying defects, it has been sometimes thought, that the judgment of those engaged in the pursuits of commerce is apt to be warped by interest, and the quick sensibility of honour blunted in them by the avidity for gain. My short experience of Liverpool has shown me, in contradiction to that general character, that one of the most opulent, the most skilful, and the most adventurous communities that ever grew great by trade, is also the most alive to every sentiment by which wealth can be ennobled; and that, in the soberest calculation of your own interests, you consider them as inseparable from the national honour.

Gentlemen, these are sentiments which, if I am to represent you in Parliament, it will be henceforth my duty to uphold and to proclaim, not as my own sentiments only, but as yours; and, if there be a situation of enviable distinction and pardonable pride to which a public man can aspire in this happy and free country, it is the being placed, by the spontaneous, unbiassed, and, I may add, unsolicited suffrages of a great and respectable portion of his countrymen, in the

great council of the nation, there to speak his own long-cherished opinions, with the assurance that they are all in unison with those of the constituents whom he is chosen to represent.

Gentlemen, I have detained you much too long, and, perhaps, I have already talked too much politics before ladies. I will therefore, Gentlemen, with your permission, bid you good night; only adding my congratulations on the peaceable, orderly demeanour which pervades the population of this extended and populous town, in a struggle which brings into conflict so many interests, and naturally excites so many passions. If it had not been my lot to have personally witnessed the proceedings of the last few days, I really could not have believed so much good order, sobriety, civility, and moderation to have been compatible with the ardent exertions and rival wishes of a contested election. Persevere, Gentlemen, in the same conduct; and, as to the issue of the cause, which is yours, Gentlemen, and not mine, of which I am but the instrument in your hands, I trust and believe that it is, and has been all along, perfectly safe and certain.

SPEECH

AT THE CLOSE OF THE FIFTH DAY'S POLL, THE 13TH OF
OCTOBER, 1812.

GENTLEMEN,

I BEGIN my address to you, as usual, with stating the amount of this day's poll. General Gascoyne, I am sorry to say, is to be mentioned first, as being in total amount two below Mr. Creevey; his numbers are 864; Mr. Creevey's, 866; but this trifling and accidental disadvantage, I have no doubt, his friends will to-morrow hasten to remove. I have no doubt, that it will serve as the stimulus to their exertions in his behalf. Mr. Brougham's total numbers are 892; and I, Gentlemen, whom your partiality had placed from the beginning at the head of the poll, maintain my situation there with a small increase of advantage over Mr. Brougham. My numbers are 926.

Such, Gentlemen, is the present state of the contest: and this day, I believe, may be considered as the last, or, perhaps, the last but one, during which this close competition will continue. From all that I have heard, I am confidently assured that we have strength, and strength to spare. But, Gentlemen, it is nevertheless most important

not to relax in our exertions, while we have any thing like competition to combat.

Gentlemen, I am grieved to tell you, that the tranquillity in which I rejoiced so much yesterday, and of which I hoped the conduct and exhortations of all the candidates would have ensured the continuance, has been interrupted to-day by an affray in the neighbourhood of the hustings. I do believe and trust, that those in the good cause are not in the least to blame, as having commenced the disturbance; but I should not do my duty to you, Gentlemen, and to your town, if I did not exhort you to persuade your friends to abstain even from the hasty retaliation of insult or injury, rather than resort to violence to avenge them.

Gentlemen, having taken the liberty to express to you those general opinions in which I know we agree, and on which our connexion is founded, I should refrain altogether from politics to-day, had not the course of the canvass, which it has been my duty to make among you, led me to the knowledge of one or two material errors or misrepresentations respecting my political sentiments and conduct, which I think it due to you and myself to correct.

In some of the societies which I have visited, a question has been put to me, whether I was prepared to support the question of parliamentary reform. I have heard that question in

societies which, I suppose, my antagonists had previously visited, and to which they had described, in glowing colours, the blessings to be derived from a new-modelling of Parliament, and had pointed out the inadequacy and defects of the present representation of the people. Upon a point of this importance I will not equivocate. I freely own my mind is made up on the question. Gentlemen, I will *not* support the question of parliamentary reform. I will not support it, because I am persuaded, that those who are most loud and, apparently, most solicitous in recommending it, do mean, and have, for years past, meant far other things than those simple words seem to intend; because I am persuaded, that that question cannot be stirred without stirring others which would shake the constitution to its very foundation; and because I am satisfied, that the House of Commons, as at present constituted, is adequate to all the functions which it is wisely and legitimately ordained to execute; that showy theories and fanciful schemes of arithmetical or geographical proportion would fail to produce any amelioration of the present frame of the House of Commons. I deny the grievance: I distrust the remedy. When it is asserted to me again, as I have often heard it asserted heretofore, that, under the present corrupt system, there is no true popular delegation, no uninfluenced or disinterested choice of representatives by the

people, my mind will recur at once to the scene which is now before me, and will repose with perfect contentment upon the practical contradiction which Liverpool affords to assertions so disparaging to the people.

When I have spoken in the House of Commons, as I have done more than once, against a motion for parliamentary reform, I have been told, by those who supported the proposition, that my voice was good for little on such a subject ; that I represented some insignificant borough whose franchise it might be my interest to maintain, but which I maintained against the rights of the great body of electors of Great Britain. Gentlemen, to this reproach is it not your good pleasure to furnish me with a triumphant answer ?

But, Gentlemen, while, on this question of parliamentary reform, I am accused of being too tardy in hazarding innovations, I have found, in other societies, that I am supposed to meditate innovations which are still more formidable, both in church and state ; that I have been represented (not by my competitors, surely !) as not attached to the religion of my country ; as prepared to subvert the Establishment, and to substitute Popery in its room. Gentlemen, such accusations are so extravagant, that on almost any other subject, and at any other period, they would be absolutely ludicrous, and to be met only with silent scorn. But, Gentlemen, my views

of what is commonly called the Catholic question (for it is to that question, as you may suppose, that I allude) have been so distinctly expressed on many recent occasions in the last session of Parliament, that I should have thought they could not have been misunderstood. I have always treated that question not in a religious, but in a political point of view. I have considered it as a question of political expediency; and, in every thing that I have agreed to, and every thing that I have proposed respecting it, I have always, with scrupulous care and anxiety, proposed to guard and fence, from even the most remote apprehension of danger, that happy constitution, in church and state, under which we have the good fortune to flourish; and one of the great blessings of which is, in my opinion, that, being itself secure and firmly seated in the habits and affections of the people, it enables us to be liberal, without danger, to all who are within the reach of its influence, and to dispense its blessings to others without hazarding them ourselves.

Gentlemen, in this view, and with such qualifications, it is that, considering the concessions already made to the Catholics (wisely or not it is too late to inquire) in the course of the present reign, as having placed that numerous class of his Majesty's subjects, particularly in Ireland, in a state very different from that in which they stood when the code enacted against them was in full

operation; as having advanced them in wealth, power, and intelligence; as having taught them to look upon themselves as admissible to the civil franchises of the state, in which they have been permitted to acquire property, and encouraged to pursue industrious and useful occupations; it is, I say, in this view, and with the qualifications which I have described, that I entertain and have acted upon the opinion, which I honestly avow, that the period of religious danger being, as I think it is, past by, the state of this country, the state of Europe and of the world point out the political expediency of repealing those civil disabilities which are the remnant of a code whose principle has been already repealed. I certainly think that this may be done without danger. I think that the circumstances of the times recommend it.

But, though these are my opinions upon that question, I know well that many respectable, pious, and worthy persons differ from me. And there is no opinion which I hold more strongly than this, that to be settled happily, this great question must be settled peaceably, and with the full concurrence and good-will of all classes of the Protestant community. I am sanguine enough to believe, that, upon full, deliberate, and temperate discussion, such a concurrence may be obtained. I am sanguine enough to think, that I see my way to such arrangements as might allay the discontent of one party, and

quiet the scruples of the other. To give to one party a triumph over the other has never entered into my contemplation.

This is not the place nor the time to enter into the very delicate and difficult discussion of the arrangements which might be necessary for a final and amicable adjustment. But when I have said, that I think it desirable and that I think it possible to effect such an arrangement, of that desirableness, and even of that possibility, the mature conviction and assent of the Protestant community form, in my view, one essential part.

Gentlemen, these opinions are not new opinions of mine, though I hear, also, that I am accused of having recently adopted them. Gentlemen, that accusation is false. These opinions I imbibed, inherited from Mr. Pitt. Had he lived, I have no doubt he would now have been acting upon them. I say *now*, because from Mr. Pitt I also inherited the determination never myself to stir, and to resist any attempt on the part of others to stir the Catholic question, during the lifetime—the living reign—of our beloved and venerated Sovereign. While he lived to the cares and duties of his station, I did resist all attempts to force that question into discussion, quite as earnestly as if I had myself thought differently upon it.

After a reign of fifty years, and such a reign, so fraught with advantages and blessings to this

nation, we owed, and none owed more deeply than the Catholics themselves, the utmost deference to the feelings, to the scruples of a Sovereign—the father of all his people. If the Catholics looked to recover their franchises at a future time, it behoved them to look forward not as a prodigal and unnatural heir to the decease of the relation whose estate he is to inherit, but with that trembling anxiety, that pious apprehension with which a dutiful and affectionate son hangs over the sick couch of a beloved parent, deprecating the inheritance which that parent's death is to transfer to him, and praying for the protraction even of his decay.

In this spirit, and with these feelings, I certainly had resisted, hitherto, even the discussion of the question, which this year I have seen no obstacle to discussing fully, deliberately, and with a view to the settlement of it for ever.

Gentlemen, I am, therefore, falsely accused either of aiming at changes in the constitution, or of having changed my own opinions upon this important subject. I am persuaded—it is my deliberate, and settled, and uninfluenced judgment and conviction, that this question *may* be so settled as not to hazard, but to confirm and strengthen the constitution, both in church and state. It is in that view that I entertained and have supported it. And, Gentlemen, if the testimony of those with whom and among whom I

have acted for now near twenty years; if the testimony of the House of Commons can be any guarantee to you for the soundness of my opinions and the rectitude of my intentions on this momentous question, I beg leave to remind you of a fact, which I state not boastingly, but simply as a fact, which, questioned as I have been, I ought not to suffer to be forgotten, that, while every motion brought forward by the opposition, on the Catholic subject, has been uniformly rejected by large majorities, that which I had the honour to propose, a few months ago, was carried by no less a majority than 129.

Gentlemen, I now take my leave of you for the present; only earnestly entreating your continued favour during the period, the short period, I trust, which is to elapse before I shall have the satisfaction of meeting you here again to congratulate you upon the success of the contest.

SPEECH

AT THE CLOSE OF THE SIXTH DAY'S POLL, THE 14TH OF
OCTOBER, 1812.

GENTLEMEN,

THE lateness of the hour to which the poll has been protracted, and the necessity under which, you must well know, I am of attending, in the course of this evening, upon several meetings of freemen, will induce me not to detain you long.

This day has been a day of great exertion on the part of my opponents, but of exertion which has shown the difficulties under which they labour, and has satisfied me that they are nearly exhausted of their strength.

I mention it as a matter of blame to no man, and should be sorry if it should be so construed, that the poll, which had hitherto gone on with little interruption, has, in the course of this day, been much interrupted and delayed; so much so, that we have polled about 120 less than on any of the preceding days. The result, however, is to me more favourable than on any day that has yet passed. You will be glad to hear, that it is also more favourable to General Gascoyne, and

that he has been enabled to repair the accidental and trifling minority in which he was placed on Saturday. On the three preceding days the number polled, in the course of each day, was about 400; but to-day we have only polled 270, or thereabouts.

I will now present you with the numbers of each: Mr. Creevey, 991; General Gascoyne, 1,003; Mr. Brougham, 1,030; and myself, 1,076, being 46 above Mr. Brougham.

Gentlemen, I am deeply concerned to have to state to you, that the affray to which I alluded last night has ended fatally to one individual. From all the accounts that I have been able to collect of the transaction, I earnestly hope that it is more to be attributed to accident than to any irritation produced by party feeling. But I trust, Gentlemen, that you will consider this unhappy and distressing event as an additional motive for using every exertion and interest with your friends to preserve tranquillity and good humour.

Gentlemen, I will detain you no longer than while I advert to one topic which my opponents have studiously endeavoured to impress upon your minds, by the circulation of handbills and by emblematical devices; a topic as unfounded in fact as it is mischievous in tendency. They have exhibited a large loaf as the loaf of peace, and a small one as the loaf of war; intending, by these emblems, to show a necessary connexion between war and

scarcity: and they have held out to you the return of Messrs. Brougham and Creevey to Parliament as the certain safeguard for the plentiful subsistence of the people.

If, Gentlemen, the imaginers of these devices can prove to you, that their favourite candidates have power to direct the course of the seasons, and thereby to render more abundant the means of subsistence for the great body of the people, I should exhort you to pass me by, and return men who are possessed of so wonderful and so supernatural a secret.

But, Gentlemen, my habits of discussion have taught me to look for some connexion between effect and cause, and never to acquiesce in the conclusion until I have attempted to trace it to its premises. After the most serious investigation, I confess, I am at a loss to discover the natural and necessary connexion between the bountiful blessings of Providence and the election of Messrs. Brougham and Creevey. Many of you have read a tale which is in the hands of your children: I mean Dr. Johnson's *Rasselas*, in which there is an account of a philosopher who fancied himself to have a control over the sunshine and the showers, and who busied himself in distributing the proper proportions of these favours, as he thought fit, to the different countries of the earth. Whether my competitors have a power like this I have not been able to ascertain. I do not mean

to impute to my competitors that they arrogate it to themselves; they are too manly and upright to attempt the practice of so gross a delusion. But their panegyrists, who couple plenty with their name and scarcity with mine, are as absurd as the philosopher in *Rasselas*: and they have not the excuse which he had for his folly; for, Gentlemen, the philosopher was mad, but these reasoners can only be mischievous.

Gentlemen, there is, in point of fact, no such necessary connexion between the question of war and the question of scarcity. I suppose any man will allow, that the present year is a year of as extended war as ever Europe witnessed. We have seen, in the southern part of Europe, the city of Madrid entered by the victorious troops of Great Britain; and we have this day heard, with horror, how the imperial city of the north has escaped from the ravages of the conqueror only by being consumed in flames of her own kindling. But, Gentlemen, the same sun which gilded the triumphal entry of Lord Wellington into Madrid, and which turned pale at the conflagration of Moscow, has ripened, during the present year, both in the north and in the south, one of the most luxuriant harvests that ever blessed mankind. Before the war-loaf is paraded again, let the philosophers who support my antagonists bring me the solution of this phenomenon.

Gentlemen, I will detain you no longer. I trust you will have the goodness, for your own sake as well as mine, to use every exertion to bring the contest to a happy and speedy conclusion.

SPEECH

AT THE CLOSE OF THE SEVENTH DAY'S POLL, THE 15TH
OF OCTOBER, 1812.

GENTLEMEN,

I CONGRATULATE you on the success of this day. The struggle which has been so long continued is happily drawing to a conclusion; and it will be decided, I have no doubt, in the course of twenty-four hours from this time, that the principles of the loyal freemen of Liverpool shall be represented according to their choice.

Gentlemen, the majority, trifling as it was, which I have enjoyed from the beginning of the poll, and which, for some days, had been nearly stationary, has, in the course of this day, been raised to an amount which almost exempts me from any personal anxiety as to the result. From 46, at which it stood yesterday, my majority is

this day raised to 256 above Mr. Brougham. You will hear, Gentlemen, with satisfaction, that General Gascoyne, who had yesterday redeemed the trifling minority into which he had been thrown the day before, has this day improved his advantage, and now stands above Mr. Brougham with a majority of 171.

Gentlemen, this advantage is great and promising; but it must not yet be considered as decisive. The activity and exertions which have produced it must not yet be discontinued; for, though our antagonists are disheartened, they do not yet confess themselves defeated.

Gentlemen, I owe it in justice to Mr. Brougham (and it is in a moment of success that one ought to be more particularly anxious to render justice to an opponent) to explain the grounds on which he has declared his intention of still persevering in the contest. I owe it in justice to him, because, without such an explanation, you might, upon comparison of the amount of the numbers which have been polled on this election with those of the preceding election, (equalling, or exceeding, as they already do, any former precedent,) be led to impute a spirit of vexation to my antagonists, and to suppose that they protracted the contest only to harass the winner. The numbers which have voted to the end of this day are 2,438. The greatest numbers, I am told, that ever voted before were 2,425.

With the utmost frankness and candour, Mr. Brougham has himself declared, that he entertains no sanguine hopes of materially bettering his condition on the poll.—(Loud cheers beginning.) Cheer not this statement, Gentlemen, for you would not exult over a fallen enemy! Mr. Brougham, I say, has stated, with the utmost frankness and candour, that he himself entertains no sanguine hopes of materially bettering his condition; but he has added, that he came here invited by a numerous and respectable class of your community, who still continue to entertain hopes which he has himself abandoned. Considering himself only as an instrument in their hands, and having the guardianship of their hopes intrusted to him, he does not think himself at liberty to erect his own opinion in opposition to theirs, or to desist from the contest until he has their authority for doing so. On this ground I must fairly say, that he appears to me to be not only justifiable, but that he would be unjustifiable if he were to act otherwise.

I shall, I am sure, not offend but gratify your feelings, if I take the opportunity, in this moment of expected and, I may almost say, assured victory, to say, that on the hustings, during the whole course of this contest, the conduct of my antagonists has been perfectly unexceptionable and gentleman-like; that our contest has been carried on without any thing like ill-humour or

captiousness; without demonstration of any of those feelings which add bitterness to conflict and humiliation to discomfiture.

Gentlemen, Mr. Brougham is a man of great talents; and, invited as he was by the entreaties and assurances of his friends, he could not well forbear presenting himself to you. Between him and me, Gentlemen, the freemen of Liverpool have exercised their free choice. I need not say how flattered, how delighted I am by the preference; but the victory is yours, not mine. I presume not to claim it as a personal triumph.

Gentlemen, between us, the candidates, there has been, as I said, no unkind or hostile feeling. When we quit you, (the one triumphant, through your favour; the other with his hopes disappointed,) let us have the satisfaction of hearing that the heats of the contest do not survive the occasion, and that we do not leave behind us in the town any unpleasant feelings to distract and disquiet your society.

Gentlemen, the lateness of the hour, and the prospect of another opportunity of addressing you when the contest shall be finally settled, prevent me from trespassing upon you farther at present.

I wish you all good night. I repeat my cordial thanks to you all for your exertions; and I look to the happiness of seeing you again, when our mutual congratulations shall be founded not on the hope, but on the certainty of success.

SPEECH

AFTER HAVING BEEN CHAIRED, ON SATURDAY, THE 17TH
OF OCTOBER, 1812.

GENTLEMEN,

I CONGRATULATE you on your final success ; for it is your victory, and not mine. The contest has been a contest of principles, not of persons ; although I should belie my own feelings if I were not to confess, that, to the latest hour of my life, I shall be proud that the battle has been fought in my person, and that my name has been associated with your exertions and illustrated by your triumph. You, Gentlemen, have done me the honour to select me, not, undoubtedly, for any individual merits of my own, (I know that I can pretend to none,) but in order that, by returning me to represent your opinions in Parliament, you might vindicate the freedom of your choice, the loyalty of your principles, and the consistency of your character.

Gentlemen, I wish that those theorists of reform, who think nothing right in the practice of our constitution, could witness this scene which I

have now the delight to survey : those who presume that every popular feeling must belong to themselves alone ; who imagine that a zealous and ardent exercise of popular rights, and an enthusiastic expression of popular sentiments, are incompatible with an equally enthusiastic attachment to all the monarchical principles of the constitution. When will such men learn, that what they call exclusively popular principles are not the principles of the people ? Can they look this day at the peaceful triumph of Liverpool, as they have looked for the last three years at the glorious and bloody struggles of Spain, and yet doubt the possibility of a combination of all that is national in feeling, with all that is loyal in principle ; of a spirit of democracy sufficient to give energy to a state, with a devotedness to monarchy sufficient to secure its conservation ?

Gentlemen, some persons have endeavoured to persuade you, that in giving your suffrages to a man who has been the uniform supporter of a war, glorious in itself, but only glorious inasmuch as it is necessary and unavoidable, you are deferring the day of peace. Fortunately, for the clear understanding of such reasonings, they have sometimes been coupled with prophecy. Let us compare, where we have an opportunity, what has happened with what was foretold ; and then judge what weight is to be assigned to the same reasonings in future.

The honourable gentleman* who left your hustings yesterday, (of whom, as an individual, I have spoken, and mean to speak with the utmost respect,) on or about the 16th of last June, proposed, in the House of Commons, a specific concession to America ; and pledged himself, that if that concession were made, peace would be preserved or restored. By a singular coincidence, on or about the same day on which that motion was made, the declaration of war by America against Great Britain passed the Senate of the United States. O ! but the concession was to heal all. The ministers, whether swayed by the honourable gentleman's eloquence or participating in his expectations, I know not, gave way ; and the concession was made. Confident from this triumph, as might naturally be expected, the honourable gentleman, the prophet of American reconciliation, presents himself (I ought rather to say, is presented by some among you) to be chosen as your representative in Parliament. Yesterday he left your town, disappointed of this honourable object : and, by another singular coincidence, the defeat of the prophecy upon which his expectations were founded is made known here on the very day of the defeat of those expectations. For, yesterday, the declaration, the tardy declaration of war by this country against

* Mr. Brougham.

America, arrives here ; and tells us, in terms too plain to be misunderstood, that to seek peace through humiliation is a course neither of honour nor of advantage.

It has been further attempted to deter you from the choice which you have done me the honour to make, by saying that I had been in office, and am likely to be in office again. I have been in office. How soon, if ever, I may be in office again I neither know, nor do I very much care, for any other reason than as it might afford me greater opportunities of promoting the interests of the country, of which your interests constitute so essential a part.

But, Gentlemen, what is meant by this imputation? Are they who urge it so little read in the principles, the democratical principles, of the British constitution, as not to know that it is one of the peculiar boasts of this country, one of the prime fruits of its free constitution, and one main security for its continuing free, that men as humble as myself, with no pretensions of wealth, or title, or high family, or wide-spreading connexions, may yet find their way into the cabinet of their sovereign, through the fair road of public service, and stand there upon a footing of equality with the proudest aristocracy of the land?

Is it from courtiers of the people, from admirers of republican virtue and republican energy,

that we hear doctrines which would tend to exclude from the management of public affairs all who are not illustrious by birth, or powerful from hereditary opulence? Why, Gentlemen, in this limited monarchy, there are undoubtedly contests for office, contests which agitate the elements of the constitution, and which keep them alive and active, without endangering the constitution itself. A republic is nothing but one continual struggle for office in every department of the state.

Mad, indeed, and desperate would be the reform which should exclude from the House of Commons, as some ignorant theorists advise, every man who has possessed, or who possesses office: separating thereby the service of the crown from that of the people; as if they were not identified in interest, and mutually dependant on each other.

Gentlemen, if I have held office, I hope I have held it honourably: I will never hold it again but on the same terms. It is not my fault that I must state facts, in my own defence, which might appear to be stated ostentatiously; but I mean them simply as defensive. It is entirely my own fault, Gentlemen, that I am not now addressing you with the seals of secretary of state in my pocket. Twice, in the course of the last six months, have the seals of the office of secretary of state been tendered to my acceptance; and twice

have I declined them. Is this like hankering after office? I declined them, not because I was unwilling to render any services of which my poor abilities were capable to my country; not because I did not acknowledge, with all due gratitude and humility, the gracious disposition of my Prince; not because I shrink from the difficulties of the times, to the encountering and overcoming of which I should feel myself, from the public situation in which I have had the honour to stand, bound to render whatever aid was in my power, if I could do so with effect, by doing so with credit. I declined office, Gentlemen, because it was tendered to me on terms not consistent, as I thought, and as my immediate friends agreed in thinking, with my personal honour; because, if accepted on such terms, it would not have enabled me to serve the public with efficiency.

Gentlemen, I presume not to trouble you with any details upon this subject; but what I have stated, and what is before the world, is, I hope, sufficient to justify me against the accusation of hankering after office. Whether you will ever see me in office again I cannot tell; but of this I can assure you, that it shall not be in a way dishonourable to myself or to you. I dare not, indeed, reckon upon the continuance of such unmerited partiality and affection as you now so kindly heap upon me; but this I can answer for,

that neither in nor out of office shall you have cause to be ashamed of me.

Gentlemen, I stated to you, two nights ago, my opinion of the conduct of my adversary, Mr. Brougham, in determining, at that time, not to decline the contest. I told you, that I thought he could not do otherwise than act upon the opinions and persuasions of his friends; and that he had explained his motives with the utmost candour and fairness. I think so still. I myself know nothing to the contrary. But I have certainly heard, that speeches delivered in another place were very different, indeed, from those which were delivered at the hustings. And, while I beg not to be understood as intending to give any colour of my own to expressions which I did not hear, and cannot vouch for, there is one topic, which is represented as having made considerable impression, which I owe it to the government of the country (however myself unconnected with it) not to suffer to pass unnoticed. The declaration of war against America has, as I am informed, been stated to have been delayed by the government of this country for the sake of sweeping into the royal chest a large sum of the droits of Admiralty, to be disposed of at the pleasure of ministers, for purposes of prodigality and corruption. Gentlemen, I would fain believe that this assertion cannot have been made. An account of the distribution of the

droits of Admiralty has, as is well known, been submitted to the House of Commons the last two years; and, surely, to attribute a measure of peace or war to a desire on the part of government to disappoint our own captors, for the sake of getting possession of a sum, of which the disposal is, after all, to be made public, is to attribute motives not only altogether unworthy, but utterly inadequate and absurd.

I say this the rather, because I must fairly own, that, differing as I do entirely as to the causes to which the delay is to be attributed, I am inclined to agree that the declaration of war against America has been delayed too long. When all hopes of preserving peace were vanished, nothing remained, in my opinion, for this government but prompt and vigorous war. It was the only course becoming this great country. It would have afforded the best chance of bringing the American government to their senses.

The opinions which I now express are in unison with those which I took the liberty of expressing, in my place in Parliament, when that concession was agreed to by the ministers, at Mr. Brougham's suggestion, upon the strength of which Mr. Brougham has been presented to your choice. I then ventured to state my doubts, whether that concession would propitiate America; whether it would not rather tend to confirm the hostile policy of that government and

to enhance its pretensions. In fact, how is it that our concession has been met? By reciprocal concession, by abated pride, assuaged malice, and returning good-will? No such thing. They have risen in their terms, as unreasonable concession will always induce and encourage an unreasonable enemy to do.

Gentlemen, you see that I speak to you as freely of the conduct and policy of our government as of the conduct of those to whom I am politically opposed. To one man, while he lived, I was devoted with all my heart and with all my soul. Since the death of Mr. Pitt, I acknowledge no leader. My political allegiance lies buried in his grave. But I have, though not his immediate counsels to follow, his memory to cherish and revere. So far as I knew his opinions on subjects which were in his time, as well as now, of great public interest, I have adhered and shall adhere to those opinions as the guides of my public conduct. Where I can only reason from analogy on new questions which may arise, I shall endeavour to apply to those questions, whatever they may be, the principles which I imbibed and inherit from him; principles which, I well know, have alone recommended me to your choice this day.

Of the cause of good government, in whatever hands the administration of government may be placed, even if in the hands of those to whom I

have been politically opposed, I shall always be a faithful and steady supporter. But I do not pledge myself to you, I will never pledge myself to any man, to be the blind and subservient supporter of the administration in any hands whatever. My general disposition is to support the government. What I find amiss, however, I shall blame with freedom; though I will not do so with any intention to excite discontent, nor at the hazard of mischief to the country.

Gentlemen, if I did not retain the independence of my own judgment in the House of Commons, I should be but an unworthy representative of the independent and enlightened community which sends me thither. It may happen, that your judgment may occasionally come in conflict with my own. Men of independent minds may honestly differ on subjects which admit of a variety of views. In all such cases, I promise you, not indeed wholly to submit my judgment to yours; you would despise me if I made so extravagant a profession: but I promise you that any difference of opinion between us will always lead me to distrust my own views, carefully to examine, and, if erroneous, frankly to correct them. Gentlemen, our judgments may clash, but our interests never: no interests of mine shall ever come in competition with yours. I promise you further, that, hoping, as I earnestly do, that the connexion, of which the foundation

is this day auspiciously laid, may last to the end of my political life—yet if, unfortunately, occasions should occur, (I cannot foresee or imagine any such,) on which there should arise between us, on points of serious importance, a radical and irreconcilable difference of opinion, I will not abuse my trust, but will give you the earliest opportunity of recalling or reconsidering your delegation of it.

Gentlemen, with the most heart-felt acknowledgment; with feelings of gratitude which words are too weak to convey, and of pride which I dare not trust myself with expressing; with a sense of the honour which you have conferred upon me, less gratifying only than my sense of the kindness with which you have overwhelmed me; with sentiments such as till this day I never knew, but which I shall recollect with delight until the latest hour of my life, I take my leave of you for the present; praying that Providence may so direct my conduct as never to give you cause, in your better judgment, to look back with regret upon the choice which you have made.

SPEECH

AT THE PUBLIC DINNER, AT THE LIVERPOOL ARMS HOTEL,
ON MONDAY, THE 26TH OF OCTOBER, 1812.

GENTLEMEN,

ALTHOUGH it has often fallen to my lot to rise, in other places, with the weight of momentous questions upon my mind, and with the certain apprehension of sharp and formidable controversy, I never in my life presented myself to a public assembly under such embarrassment as I feel at the present moment. There is something in the anticipation of hostility which animates; but excessive kindness only overwhelms. My first fear, therefore, in rising to address you, is that I may not be able to finish what I wish to say; that I may fail not only in the expression of my own feelings, but in due acknowledgment for those which you have so generously expressed towards me.

Gentlemen, in the course of a political life of no very short duration I have had many duties to fulfil. I have endeavoured to fulfil them to the best of my power. A new duty is now cast

upon me, to which I have hitherto been a stranger, —the duty of representing one of the greatest, the most powerful, the most wealthy, and most enlightened communities of this great kingdom : a duty involving many minor duties ; all of which, however, may be summed up shortly thus—that I am to be faithful to your particular interests, but true, at the same time, to the general interests of the country.

Gentlemen, in respect to the first of these points, I have only to wish that my ability were equal to my good-will. I feel no difficulty in undertaking whatever is in my power ; but I am aware that I have much to learn, and much to inquire ; much to balance in my own mind before I can consider myself as fairly competent to the task which is cast upon me. To you, for whose interests I am to labour, I must look for the knowledge that is to enable me to labour for them with effect. I look to you with confidence ; I invite communication ; and shall be at all times open to your suggestions and advice.

The particular interests of this great town, however, as at all times they are intimately blended with the general interests, so are they to be weighed and considered as forming part of the general policy of the empire. This, I need not tell you, is eminently true with respect to that great question, of which we have heard so much during the late contest—the question of

peace. Commerce and peace are, in the ordinary course of things, linked together. And it has been endeavoured to be insinuated by our opponents, that they alone could be the faithful guardians of the interests of a great commercial town, who are, as they are pleased to call themselves, lovers of peace. Such interests, they insist, must perish in the hands of those who (like myself, I suppose) are friends and advocates of war. Lovers of peace! Who are *not* lovers of peace in the abstract? Friends and advocates of war! Who are so mad or so malignant as to prefer war for war's sake? Who are advocates of war, as war, any more than of famine or of pestilence? They who indulge themselves in such loose and general propositions must surely be conscious that they are deceiving the audience whom they address. They must know, that the questions of peace and war are amongst the most difficult and complicated questions that human imagination can conceive, or that human genius can be called upon to disentangle. The propositions which they so glibly announce as simple propositions of elementary truth, are (as they know full well) interwoven with considerations and circumstances which render the discussion of them perplexed and intricate in the extreme. The question of peace is beset with difficulties which they themselves, if the helm of the state were put into their hands, would find, at the present moment, wholly

insurmountable. But these difficulties they carefully keep out of sight, when they wish to make an impression on popular feelings.

In what a state of the world is it that these gentlemen talk of peace, and of themselves as the lovers of peace, just as calmly as if it were only a mere question of taste and fancy; as if to choose were to have, and to have were securely to enjoy! What, Gentlemen, should you think of the sense or the fairness of men who, in the midst of the distress and desolation occasioned in one of your West India islands by a hurricane or tornado, while the air was involved in a pitchy darkness and the city rocking with volcanic explosions, were to run about the streets, proclaiming themselves “the friends of light and of perpendicular position?” Who does not love light better than darkness? Who would not rather have the walls of his house standing erect than tumbling about his ears? But what, I say, should you think of men—of their candour or of their sense—who, in the midst of such a public calamity, instead of lending a helping hand to their fellow-sufferers, and bearing patiently their own share of afflictions not to be avoided, should labour to impress upon the minds of the people additional motives of consternation and despair, and to make their sufferings intolerable, by insinuating that they had been unnecessarily incurred?

Gentlemen, the order of things in the moral and political world is not less convulsed, at the present moment, than in the physical world by such visitations of Providence as those which I have just described. The storm is abroad. For purposes inscrutable to us, it has pleased Providence to let loose upon mankind a scourge of nations, who carries death and devastation into the remotest corners of the earth. But, amidst this universal havoc, this general prostration of the nations of Europe, this rocking of the battlements of our own separate fortress, we are asked, with an air of simplicity which would be quite touching, if we could imagine it to proceed from mere defect of understanding, “Why are we not at peace?”

A grosser delusion than is attempted by insinuating that war is our choice, and peace within our reach, but wilfully rejected, was never yet imposed upon mankind. The question is not whether we love peace, but whether we can obtain it: the only arguable difference between men of honest minds and sober understandings must be as to the terms on which peace ought to be made; and the main characteristic of those terms all rational men would agree to be this—that they should be such as to afford a fair and reasonable security for its continuance. But this can be effected by honourable terms alone, and for this one plain reason, that a peace purchased

by ignominy would be but a short intermission of war.

But, absurd and unfair as this unreasoning cry of peace is in relation to general politics, with what aggravated absurdity is it addressed to you, Gentlemen, on the peculiar ground of your commercial interests! As if peace and commerce, connected though I have stated them to be, in the ordinary course of things and in the common train of consequences, were not expressly dissociated in the whole system of the policy of our enemy! Peace! with whom? With a man who has shown himself the fosterer of commerce; with one who holds it high among the cares and blessings of a good government; who delights in strengthening those bonds by which commercial intercourse unites the different societies of mankind? No: with one to whom commerce is avowedly an object of hatred and of jealousy: of hatred, because it is the enlightener of mankind, diffusing intelligence, communicating sympathies, and exciting a community of interest between nations, whom he wishes to dis sever, that separately he may enslave them; of his jealousy, because it is the foundation of the strength and greatness of that power (the happy country in which we live) by whose interference alone his schemes of universal dominion can be defeated. With such a man, is it *our* fault that we are not at peace? Through any peace that

such a man would grant to our supplications, is it likely that the interests of commerce would be specially secured to us?

If peace could be had, with the accustomed blessings and with the ordinary security of peace, God forbid that it should not be accepted, that it should not be sought, with avidity! But the question is, whether such a peace is indeed to be had. And what I complain of as unfair and delusive in the argument of our adversaries is, that all the common-place topics of peace are pressed into their service, without examining how far those topics apply to the present situation of the world; and that the question is always stated by them as if it were one of abstract comparison between war, with all its train of calamities, and peace, with all its attendant benefits; upon which comparison we perversely preferred the odious alternative of war.

Nor are they contented with this unfairness. They describe, in glowing colours, the calamities incident to war; and more than insinuate, that those who support the government in the prosecution of the war (sinking always the consideration of its unavoidableness) are, therefore, insensible to the miseries of their fellow-creatures.

War has, undoubtedly, its calamities and afflictions: where is the man that has the heart to witness them—to read of them—without being deeply affected? And where is the man who, when his

heart is so affected, does not willingly stretch forth his hand, according to his means, to relieve them? Not, I am sure, in Liverpool; not, I am sure, among those around me, to whom this reproach of insensibility has been, of late, so emphatically applied.

But I wish that our adversaries would deal out the like measure to our enemy and to ourselves; that they would draw the picture of war as affecting both parties engaged in it; and that, in doing so, they would mix their colours, and not accumulate all that is gloomy upon one side of the picture, contrasting with it all that is bright and cheering on the other. War has its calamities: many in which we are sharers; some from which, by the peculiar blessing of our situation, we are happily exempt, while they fall most heavily upon other nations. With all its alleviations, however, great undoubtedly are the calamities of a state of war. But how happens it, that, while for the enemy it has, amidst all its calamities, its consolations and its glories, we hear on our side only of what we suffer, and never of what we achieve? How happens it, that the same persons who, when they look at the victories of our enemies, are so dazzled as to see nothing of the privations and miseries of France, when they contemplate the exploits of this country, turn the diminishing end of the glass, but present us, at the same time, with a magnified view of our misfortunes?

When I consider at what cost the victories of France are obtained: when I consider, not in France only, but in all the conquered countries, the destruction of industry; the stagnation of commerce; manufactures and agriculture languishing for want of hands; aged parents weeping over the desolation of their families, and the teeming mother almost deprecating the birth of her male child, who is to be torn away to pitiless destruction before his limbs have the pith of manhood formed in them, I contemplate a scene of grievous distress and suffering. But I do not suffer my imagination so far to run away with me as to deny, that for all this distress conquest is *some* compensation, and that the subjects of the conqueror are consoled for their sufferings by a sense of national glory. Only let it be granted, that, for privations, great indeed, but surely less than those of the subjects of our enemy, we, too, may be capable of deriving some consolation from a series of achievements reflecting lustre on the national character; achievements almost unexampled in our past history, and such as, only a few years ago, the most sanguine imagination would hardly have ventured to anticipate!

I am not saying—God forbid I should say so!—let us continue a war, otherwise unnecessary and avoidable, for the sake of military glory. I am not even quarrelling with that sober and staid philosophy which views all military glory as

delusive and dangerous to mankind : I am only desiring that there may be something of impartiality in our moral animadversions; and that, if (as I contend) peace cannot be had, and if (as is the natural consequence) war must be endured, we may be allowed, as well as our enemy, to mitigate (I will not say to compensate) what we suffer in privation by what we gain in glory.

Gentlemen, I do not say, that this splendid accession of military fame ought to make us enamoured of the war, or to reconcile us to persevering in it, if a solid peace were really attainable. But are they who impute this argument to us, and who maintain the adverse argument themselves, prepared to say, that peace, purchased at *any* price, is preferable to a war carried on with such sacrifices as we are making? If they are, I take the liberty of telling them, that one part of the price which we should now have to pay for peace would be the surrender of our maritime rights, and therewith, at no distant time, of the very commerce for which they are so anxious to provide. If they answer, as they sometimes do, that they do not mean total surrender, then I reply, that they have, as I said before, no right to take the benefit to themselves of all the general arguments for peace in the abstract; for there are, in that case, certain terms on which they themselves would not make peace—on which

they themselves would continue the miseries of war; and the question between them and us, therefore, is *not*, as they state it, "Peace or war;" but, "Is peace *now* attainable on terms such as even they would recommend or sanction." This may be, and it is, a very weighty question; but it is *not* the question which has been so loudly clamoured in your ears, and the happy and easy solution of which was promised to you, if you would return my antagonists to Parliament.

Return them to Parliament, you were told, and the streets of Liverpool would presently resound again with the hum of peaceful industry, and your ports would again be crowded with the commerce of the world. I have never answered these representations but by one question:—If England sink, how is Liverpool to survive? In other words, such ought, undoubtedly, to be the effects of peace; but that such should be its effects must depend upon the character of the peace, and not merely upon the name.

Character has sometimes been said to be an inconvenience. An individual of high reputation dares not do a dishonourable act, however it might contribute to a present advantage. A nation which has taken such a stand as Great Britain has now long maintained in the world, cannot forfeit its honour without risking its very existence.

If, indeed, the ingenuity of man could devise an arrangement by which the commercial interests of Liverpool could be saved at the expense of the general interests of the country, I might hesitate in presenting myself to you, in opposition to such an arrangement. But this is not attempted to be shown. It is argued, more broadly, that the country is in such a situation that we must yield, if not to a sense of the wickedness, at least to that of the hopelessness of war; and must conform our conduct, not to our vital interests, but to our fallen fortunes. All the allies of Great Britain, we are told, are unfortunate. The converse of this proposition is nearer the truth. The unfortunate are, and have become, by that very title, our allies. We have stepped forward to raise the fallen,—to sustain the oppressed,—to interpose between the prostrate victim and the descending sword of the conqueror. In all this I see nothing that impoverishes or impairs the national hope. I see much that exalts the national character. But, in truth, our interest is not at variance with our character: for scarcely is the commercial prosperity of Liverpool more closely interwoven with the greatness of the country, than is the permanent greatness and the safety of England connected with the peace and freedom of Europe.

But, at least, it has been said, we need not have aggravated the evils of the war, in which we

are already engaged, by measures which have added America to the number of our enemies. Upon this subject, without entering into the question of the original policy of the orders in council, we are furnished with an answer, so far as America is concerned, out of the mouths of our antagonists themselves. Whether the war was of our seeking, or was of the choice of the American government, need not now be argued : for it has been admitted, nay, contended, by our antagonists, however that may be, that the concession which has been made, on our part, was such as ought to have restored peace. Whether that concession was wisely or improvidently made might be a matter of controversy. I have no doubt myself upon the subject; but the thing is done, and I will not now argue about it. But, though, whether it were wisely made or not be matter of controversy, that it was made fruitlessly is matter of fact. Concession, therefore, is not an infallible recipe for peace. And the only advantage, that I know of, which the government will have gained by giving up a system of measures, upon the principle of which (for I will say nothing of the details of its execution) they had stood firm for about five years, is in the promised support in Parliament, upon American questions, of those members of the opposition who recommended this surrender.

The orders in council being now defunct, it

would be useless to take up your time with explaining and defending their principle, and showing (as I think I could show) that a steady adherence to it (if it had been steadily adhered to) would have afforded a chance, at least, of forcing upon the enemy a change of his anti-commercial system. The abandonment of them has not produced the specific good which was guaranteed to us, in the restoration of peace with America; we are now, therefore, to look for it, I hope, in that happy unanimity with which the war against America is henceforth to be carried on.

From this ill-advised, (as I must presume to think it,) from this (as I always thought it would prove to be) disappointed scheme of pacification through concession, I turn with pleasure to the consideration of any other source of relief and benefit to commerce. One main consolation under the operation of the decrees of the enemy (so far as they have succeeded, and that they have had some success I am not prepared to deny) is, that it has taught us to look more attentively to our own resources. Among these, that to which my friend, your worthy chairman*, has alluded, in the speech in which he did me the honour to propose my health, the opening of the East India trade undoubtedly holds a foremost

* John Gladstone, Esq.

place. This opinion, as is well known to your worthy chairman, (whom I had the pleasure of seeing in London last year, when he was deputed by you, Gentlemen, to attend to your interests on the intended renewal of the East India Company's charter,) was entertained by me long before I had any notion of being called upon by you to fill the honourable situation of your representative: the opinion, I mean, that considerable commercial relief may be derived from the extension of the East India trade. That opinion, however, I must beg leave to guard with certain qualifications. First, though the relief will, I hope, be considerable eventually, I am afraid it will be neither so extensive nor so immediate as to satisfy fully the sanguine expectations that have been excited. I would caution those who are preparing to adventure in this new field, against a too sanguine anticipation of sudden success: but I would caution them also against a too early despondency, if their first hopes shall not have been realized; against hoping too much, and against despairing too soon. It is of the nature of commerce to find its own level; but a new opening to individual enterprise and industry, however it may be attended with instances of partial failure and disappointment, cannot but be upon the whole highly and permanently beneficial to the commercial interests of the community. The second qualification with which I

wish to guard my opinion is this—that the question of the open trade ought not to be discussed (as I think I have seen a disposition to discuss it sometimes) as a hostile question between the East India Company and the country. Of the separate interests of the company I should say, Gentlemen, as I have ventured to say to you of your own, that they must be weighed and considered as connected with, and as subordinate to, the general interests of the country. But it does not, therefore, follow, that every thing taken from the company would be necessarily gained to the country at large ; or, that what may be left in their hands, may not be left there as much for the benefit of the country as for their own. It is in the spirit of a joint, and not of a clashing interest, that the subject will best be discussed with advantage to both parties : nor would it be safe, that sweeping general principles should be hastily applied to an empire so anomalous in the history of the world as that which the company have acquired in India ; an empire depending mainly on opinion, and to be touched, therefore, with a delicate and cautious hand.

I abstain from entering into detail upon a subject so large and complicated ; but I thought it right, Gentlemen, to state to you the heads under which, as it appears to me, it will be hereafter to be considered. I take no shame to myself in owning, that I have much to learn and

to weigh, before my own opinion, upon all the several points of this momentous question, can be fully made up. I need hardly repeat, that, as upon other subjects so especially upon this, I shall thankfully receive any communications which any among you may be pleased to make to me.

Gentlemen, I am now naturally led to say a few words on the subject of the connexion which I have had the happiness to form with you, and which you are kind enough to describe as auspicious and honourable. To have been called in such a manner to the representation of this great and respectable town, would be, if my political life should terminate to-morrow, as glorious an end of it as I could have desired ; but, when the commencement of our connexion is accompanied, on your part, by an expression of your wish that it may be perpetuated, I know not how to thank you. I dare not re-echo that wish without expressing, at the same time, my own consciousness that your partiality takes on trust much more than any personal services of mine can ever realize.

As to the manner in which the election has been conducted, Gentlemen, we have been told, that it has been all compulsion and oppression on our part ; that none have voted for me except “ poor constrained things,” whose hearts were on the other side. We have been told, that all

the gallant spirit, all the free and liberal exertions of the contest, have been with my antagonists. Gentlemen, when, looking down the tables before me, I view the flower of the youth of Liverpool, who have been gratuitously militant in my cause,—not in *my* cause, I should say, but in your cause, Gentlemen, in the cause of their town and of their principles; when I see their countenances, at this moment, beaming with ingenuousness and spirit, with the recollection of their voluntary toils, and with the pride of their well-earned triumph, I cannot condescend to refute by words assertions so utterly self-contradicted. But I cannot suppress a suspicion, that the constraint and influence imputed to you may, indeed, have been exerted,—but on the other side; and that we are indebted for this false accusation to the desire of anticipating a true one.

Before the election took place, Gentlemen, you heard enough, from the friends of our antagonists, of your own importance in the scale of the empire; and, no doubt, had you chosen as they wished, you would have continued to be, in their estimation and panegyrics, the first commercial town in England. But now, I hear and read, that you are little better than a rotten borough; a place of no account or rightful influence in the concerns of the country; warped by partial pursuits, and subservient to objects of individual

gain. Not such, Gentlemen, is my estimate of the importance of this great commercial community. There are those, indeed, who tell us, that the lords of the soil alone have an interest in the constitution, and ought alone to have weight in the councils of England: a doctrine singularly coincident with that which is held by France, with respect to England herself, that extent of territory and of population alone confers a just right to sway and preponderance among nations, to the empire of the land and of the sea. Gentlemen, a similar answer may be given to both these arguments. Not to the possessors of the soil alone, but to those also who, by their commercial enterprise and honest industry, raise the acres of that soil to a hundredfold their value, belongs a share of weight in the representation of their country, and a due degree of influence in its public concerns. Great Britain, small in extent though she be, and neither blessed with natural fertility, nor with exuberance of population, as compared with the more favoured empires of the earth, yet mighty and powerful by her acquired means, by her commercial and maritime strength, refutes the haughty pretension of territorial ascendancy; and while she wields the trident, establishes her right to share the sceptre, of the world.

Gentlemen, to preserve to you your just weight in the concerns of the country, is my duty as

representative for Liverpool: to preserve to that country unimpaired its just rank and power among the nations of the world has always been the doctrine of my political creed, and the object of my political conduct.

Gentlemen, I will trespass on you no longer. I thank you for the honours, and still more for the kindnesses, which you have showered upon me. Looking back, I presume not to think that I have deserved them: I look forward only with the hope that I may not disgrace them.

SPEECH

ON THE SAME OCCASION, AFTER "THE IMMORTAL MEMORY OF THE RIGHT HONOURABLE WILLIAM PITT" HAD BEEN DRUNK.

GENTLEMEN,

It is usual to return thanks for any honour conferred upon an absent friend. I understand that it will not be unacceptable to you that I should presume, on this occasion, to extend that usage, and to express my acknowledgments for the

honour done to the name of a departed friend, the illustrious statesman whom you have just now so feelingly commemorated.

The sentiments with which you regard the memory of that great and good man are not the sentiments of Liverpool only, but of England; not of England only, but of Europe and of the world. Mr. Pitt, Gentlemen, was always true to those principles which the town of Liverpool has been distinguished for supporting: principles of loyalty and good government at home, and of dignified and magnanimous policy abroad. But Mr. Pitt has not escaped the misrepresentation, or misunderstanding, I will call it, to which these principles themselves have been exposed; and, in the course of the recent contest, his name has been brought forward, and his memory reviled as the advocate and author of war. Gentlemen, without going now into any argument as to the origin of the war in 1793, this at least, I think, may be affirmed of Mr. Pitt, beyond the possibility of contradiction, that, if ever there was a statesman in the world whose interests, individually, were founded in peace,—if ever there was a statesman of whom it might be presumed, that, in conducting his country into war, he was led by a sense of irresistible necessity, it must have been he, whose fame as well as whose power rested on the basis of the financial prosperity of his country.

When posterity shall look back upon that great man, they will discriminate two different eras in his life. The one, when, on his succession to the government of the country, he found the finances of the state dilapidated and its resources enervated by an ill-conducted war. It was then that, with a skilful and-repairing hand, he restored the credit of the country, recruited its exhausted means, explored and expanded its capacities for exertion, and laid the foundation of that solid system, of which it is enough to say, that it has endured amid the storms which have assailed it since that time. From this statement it may be confidently inferred, that war could not be more the passion of Mr. Pitt than, most assuredly, it could be his interest. Whether it were, nevertheless, the fault of Mr. Pitt or not, (the fault, I mean, of his judgment,) that we were engaged, precisely at the moment at which we were engaged, in the war which has continued, with little intermission, to the present time, may, perhaps, be matter of historical controversy; but that, by no human wisdom, and by no human forbearance, that war could have been deferred many years, or, perhaps, many months, the impartial historian will, I think, find it easy to demonstrate. But be that as it may; however we may have been brought into the war, what admits of no controversy at all is, that, from the reviving energy of his early administration, the country

derived that strength by which it has been enabled to go through the contest. The second era of his political life began at the period when, from the centre of Europe, burst forth that volcanic eruption of desolating principles which threatened to overwhelm the civilized world. The firm resistance which Mr. Pitt opposed to the dangers then menacing the country ; the promptitude with which he took his stand on the ground of the constitution, and the courage with which he maintained it ; the voice wherewith he roused the people—the mighty arm wherewith he saved the monarchy, I need not recall to your recollection ; for it is in faithful commemoration of these eminent services that you have this day called upon his name.

Gentlemen, into whatever hands the administration of the government may be committed, I hope that the ministers will keep Mr. Pitt's example before their eyes ; that they will catch, from that example, reverence for the constitution and zeal for the glory of their country ; that they will learn from it to unite the interests of the people with those of the crown, in their domestic government ; and to uphold, by adequate exertions, and by a tone and vigour of counsels worthy of the high station to which Great Britain is entitled among the nations of the earth, the British name and influence abroad.

Gentlemen, I am desired by your worthy chairman, before I sit down, to propose the next toast. According to the customary courtesy, in meetings like the present, of drinking the health of those persons whom the crown may have selected for the management of the public affairs, I am to propose to you "The Health of his Majesty's Ministers." In doing so, I beg to be understood, not as the panegyrist or partisan of the present ministers; not as avowing any connexion with them, nor as owing them any obligation or any particular kindness; but simply as paying to his Majesty's present ministers that compliment which I would not withhold from any other set of men, placed, in these arduous times, in the same public station, as the chosen servants of the crown; wishing well to all their endeavours for the public good, but coupling my good wishes with this condition, on which alone I can consent to give my feeble support to any administration—that they shall, according to the best of their ability, maintain at home the constitutional principles, and uphold abroad the high-minded policy of Mr. Pitt.

SPEECH

AT A DINNER GIVEN BY SAMUEL STANIFORTH, ESQ., MAYOR,
IN THE TOWN-HALL, ON WEDNESDAY, THE 8TH OF
OCTOBER, 1812, ON "THE HEALTH OF THE MEMBERS
FOR LIVERPOOL" BEING DRUNK.

GENTLEMEN,

For the honour done to myself and my worthy colleague, I rise to offer the thanks of both: I wish he were present to thank you in person. For my own part, I am delighted that I have remained in Liverpool until this day, to witness such an assembly as I have now the pleasure of seeing; an assembly composed of gentlemen of all parties, now happily united in amicable intercourse, who, but recently, were engaged, with honourable zeal, in a conflict of opposite politics. Having said thus much, I should belie my feelings if I were not to confess my peculiar obligations to those gentlemen who so zealously supported me; but, at the same time, I should act unworthily of myself and of them, if, since I am

honoured with a delegation of this enviable trust, I were not to consider myself as the representative of *all*. I can confidently promise, that, whatever applications may be made to me, they shall always receive due attention; and whatever counsel or instruction may be communicated to me, by any individual, (and such communications I most earnestly solicit,) that individual shall never have an opportunity of discovering, from my reception of him, that I have known how he voted. But this is not an occasion to expatiate on such topics. I only hope, Gentlemen, that, when I have the happiness of seeing you all again, I shall find unabated kindness among those who have supported me, and moderated hostility among those who have opposed me.

SPEECH

AT A PUBLIC DINNER, IN HONOUR OF HIS RETURN FOR
LIVERPOOL, IN THE NEW EXCHANGE ROOM, MANCHESTER,
ON THE 31ST OF OCTOBER, 1812.

GENTLEMEN,

IF, in every address which I have had occasion to make to my immediate constituents, whose unexpected selection of me for their representative has introduced me this day to your kind congratulations, I have uniformly expressed, because I have uniformly felt, that to no individual claims or pretensions of my own I could attribute the preference which they had been pleased to show me, how much more must I feel at the present moment, stranger as I was to them, but still more a stranger to you, the manner in which you have had the goodness to receive me? In either case, I am perfectly aware, that I am indebted for my reception only to an approbation of the public principles which I have always had the honour to uphold.

Gentlemen, when I received that flattering invitation, the result of which has occasioned the triumph that you are now celebrating, many

private considerations would have induced me to decline it. I had no personal knowledge of Liverpool; I had no local connexion with the place, or with any of its inhabitants, which could in any way have recommended me to their notice. I could not but know, that, if any part of the kingdom was labouring under difficulties, Liverpool was one of the places in which they were likely to be felt most keenly; and it certainly had not escaped me, that the name of Liverpool was one of those which had been most loudly put forward (how far by its own authority I could not then decide) in all arguments for concession and national humiliation. This of itself was not encouraging. But, when the invitation was repeated and pressed upon me; and when I found, that, by the accidental circumstances of the times, Liverpool had been, as it were, selected as the *arena* on which, at the present crisis, the battle was to be fought between those principles, both of external and domestic policy, which have made Great Britain what she is, and those which it has been the business of my life to oppose, whatever might be my individual feelings, I considered it as a duty which I owed to my country, not to withdraw myself from the chance of rendering to it a better service than, perhaps, I might ever again have an opportunity of rendering. To be sought out as the champion of those principles by which the

constitution has been upheld, by which, in times of unparalleled difficulty and danger, and while nations have been falling around us, we have been enabled to preserve ourselves erect amidst the convulsions of the world, was an honour to be prized most dearly. But I can truly say, that not the honour, but the sense of public duty was that which prevailed with me. And, Gentlemen, as you are met here to celebrate, not the victory of an individual, but that of the cause of which I was chosen the champion, I can say, frankly, that I enter into all your feelings.

Gentlemen, there are two sorts of popularity : there is one which is to be gained by watching the weak moments of the public opinion, by aggravating temporary difficulties, or by courting and inflaming the bad passions of the populace. There is another, which is to be won by bearing up, firmly and steadily, under whatever difficulties, even, if necessary, under misconstruction and obloquy, in faithful adherence to the principles by which our greatness as a nation and our happiness as a people are to be maintained. To the former sort of popularity I make no pretension ; but I cannot look round upon the company here assembled, and deny that the latter, if I should be so fortunate as to deserve it, would, indeed, be dear to my heart.

Gentlemen, in this great county, with which, till this time, it was not my good fortune to be

acquainted, but in which I have met with a degree of kindness that will be indelibly stamped upon my recollection; in this country it was thought that the spirit of discontent principally prevailed. It was known, that you were suffering under great and grievous privations; it was thought, sincerely thought, I have no doubt, by some people of great ability, that you owed your sufferings to the misconduct of government, and not to those causes which have overwhelmed other nations and affected our own; it was hoped, that, by no very great exertion of talent, you might be led to look for the remedy of your sufferings and privations in changes in the internal and external policy of the country. Could those principles have been successfully disseminated among you, a standard might have been planted, around which commerce and manufactures might have rallied against the government of the country.

But it surely must have been apparent, even to the advocates of these principles themselves, that, even if their numbers might prevail for a time, their reasonings would not stand the test of rational inquiry.

With regard to peace: it has been considered a safe and harmless, as well as a true and generous sentiment heretofore, that, for a nation once committed in hostilities, the road to honourable peace is through successful war. Now-a-days,

the advocates of this sentiment are held up to public detestation, as enemies of their country, as enemies of peace and of human kind. Can any thing be more preposterous, more fallacious? If the question be between peace and war, what human being can hesitate to decide? But the question is, first, whether, generally, peace is best to be obtained by prostration, or by teaching our enemies that we have the means of asserting and maintaining our independency: and there is a second question, in the present case, which touches you, Gentlemen, most nearly,—How is a peace to be obtained which shall remove the distresses of our manufactures, and open anew the channels of commercial intercourse?

That you are suffering, Gentlemen—that every man whom I now address must be suffering, in his own person in a great degree, in his immediate connexions in a still greater, and, most of all, with regard to those people who depend upon him for support, is, I am afraid, too true; and it is a truth which no man can contemplate but with the deepest concern. But that these sufferings are inflicted by any other than by that Hand which bringeth down punishment upon nations, I must utterly deny. Who is there that will seriously maintain, that the destroyer, whom Providence has let loose upon the world, is to be propitiated by supplication; or, above all, that any peace, which supplication could obtain from

him, would be a peace favourable to commerce? Whatever injury our enemy has done to us, by stopping up the channels of our trade, I will venture to say, that the same means of mischief might be practised by him during peace, if that peace were to leave the sway of the whole continent of Europe actually or virtually in his hands.

If, indeed, they who cry for peace mean no more than that it is to be accepted on any tolerable conditions, I do not differ with them. Our only difference is, then, about those conditions: and I contend, as I hope they must, that the conditions should be such as to secure our commercial interests. But that is not what they mean: for, if they meant only that, they would have no ground on which to set themselves up as greater lovers of peace than their neighbours. If they mean any thing different from the rest of mankind, they must mean, that they would make greater concessions; that they would accept less favourable terms; that peace is, in their view, to be purchased at the sacrifice of much, at the hazard of every thing which may be called national greatness. They mean this, or they mean nothing by their pre-eminent desire for peace; for all that is short of this, every rational man means just as well as they.

But again, I say, what is this to do for commerce? Commercial interest is, as they pretend, the peculiar ground on which they have a claim

to your partiality, Gentlemen; on which their politics are preferable to mine. Now, do they, or do they not acknowledge, that, after such a peace as they propose, every decree by which your commerce has suffered might be re-enacted by the enemy, not only without any ability on your part to resist, but without any right to make it matter of remonstrance? For, supposing Great Britain even to retain all her conquests, and supposing, on the other hand, the enemy to retain that which we have not yet been able to deprive him of—his power, the ports of the continent might still be shut against you, and you might then have to deplore the treaty of peace as the act by which you sealed your own exclusion from the commerce of Europe.

What would be the alternative left to us in such a state of things? Why, either to submit, indefinitely, to the continuance of the very privations, for the removal of which we were so anxious to make peace; or to seek a new war, for the purpose of repairing the blunder of a peace so hastily and improvidently made. Even with the ancient government of France, and in the ancient state of Europe, commercial rivalry might have made it desirable to guard our commerce and manufactures by favourable stipulations at a peace. But now, instead of France alone, we are to consider all Europe as in one man's hand, and acting under his pervading influence; and,

instead of commercial rivalry, a deadly and exterminating hatred of all commerce, but of British commerce especially, is the spirit by which that influence is directed. Make peace, therefore, to-morrow; dismantle your navy; withdraw your troops; but, if the peace be made in an humble tone, not a bale of your goods is nearer to the ports of the continent. Peace, on the contrary, will enable our enemy to mature and complete his scheme of measures against the commerce of Great Britain. I repeat it, he may do this after such a peace is concluded, without giving us the right even to remonstrate; and we shall have voluntarily stripped ourselves of those means of retaliation, by which trade has been enabled, I will not say to flourish, (lest I should be accused of undervaluing your present inconveniences, which, God knows, I do not,) but to survive at least, amidst the calamities and under the shield of war.

What delusion is it, then, to address to you, Gentlemen, and to the commercial classes particularly, the exhortation to bestir yourselves to force your government to peace? More rational would it be to address the agricultural class alone, as the plough and the spade must still be employed, though the ports of all the world should be permanently shut against our shipping and against the products of our looms. But neither can the landed and commercial interests of this country be separated from each other. Nor

can either, or both, reap the benefit of peace, unless that peace shall be reasonably secure: it must not be negotiated in a tone of humiliation and despair.

When my antagonists called upon the electors of Liverpool for their suffrages, they were (whether fortunately for themselves or not, I will not pretend to say) in the very process of that experiment, which they recommended to be tried upon a large scale, but which they had succeeded in procuring first to be made on a smaller scale with America. The orders in council, the subject of so loud remonstrance, and (as I must continue to think, notwithstanding all the eloquence with which they were attacked, and which ultimately prevailed against them) of so much misrepresentation, were rescinded. The result of this concession was to be peace with America: the plain inference from this result, similar concessions to France.

Gentlemen, I need not tell you that experiment has failed; leaving a sufficient argument against the counsels of those who may think honestly, though mistakenly, there is but one way of preserving peace, concession, and but one path to national safety, dishonour.

The second, and still more radical and efficacious mode which is recommended to you for the cure of all evils real and imaginary, for abolishing war with its train of sufferings, and

ensuring the return and continuance of peace with all its blessings, for animating trade and getting rid of taxes, is a reform in the Commons House of Parliament. Upon this ground, also, was raised the standard against which I was called upon to take the field. Gentlemen, the view which I have always taken of this subject, which, much as is attempted to be made of it, does not, I really believe, agitate the public mind in the degree which is supposed, has been simply this: that the evil complained of does not exist, and, therefore, the remedy called for is unnecessary. In addressing the largest unrepresented town in the United Kingdom, I should use this language with fear and trembling, if I did not know that I was addressing, at the same time, men of sense, of reflection, and of liberality, who know well that the interests of *unrepresented* Manchester are safe among the interests of represented England. Some persons think, that the House of Commons ought to be all in all in the constitution; and that every portion of the people ought to be immediately, actively, and perpetually in contact with their particular representatives in the House of Commons. If this were a true view of the constitution, undoubtedly the present scheme of representation is inadequate. But if this be true, we are living under a different constitution from that of England. I think we have the happiness to live under a limited

monarchy, not under a crowned republic. And I think the House of Commons, as at present constituted, equal to its functions, because I conceive it to be the office of the members of the House of Commons not to conduct the government themselves, but to watch over and control the ministers of the crown; to represent and to speak the opinion of the people,—to speak it in a voice of thunder, if their interests are neglected or their rights invaded; but to do this not as an assembly of delegates from independent states, but as a body of men chosen from among the whole community, to unite their efforts in promoting the general interests of the country at large.

If this be, as I humbly conceive it to be, the truer view of the legitimate and constitutional functions of the House of Commons, then is the House of Commons adequate to its duties. Nor can I think ill of that frame of government, by the operation of which, however imperfect in theory, Great Britain has been raised above all other nations, and distinguished as much by the happiness of her people, as by the loftiness of her character. Gentlemen, it is upon these principles that I allowed myself to be offered for the town of Liverpool. Permit me to say, that I would not have allowed myself to be offered on any other. Having been chosen on these principles, the measure of my satisfaction will be

complete, if the sister town of Manchester shall sanction, with her approbation, the choice which Liverpool has made.

Gentlemen, again and again I thank you for the kindness with which you have been pleased to receive me. I cannot promise you, in return for it, to endeavour to alter the frame of the House of Commons, in order to open an admission for new representatives, even from you ; but I promise you, that, while the present defective state of representation (if defective it be) continues, I shall be happy to do all in my feeble power to make the deficiency as little felt by you as possible, by attending, on all occasions, to the wants and interest of Manchester.

SPEECHES

AT A

PUBLIC DINNER IN 1814.



INTRODUCTION.

THE two following speeches were delivered at a public dinner given to Mr. Canning by his friends and constituents, during his visit to Liverpool, in January, 1814. The company present on the occasion consisted of upwards of four hundred gentlemen, over whom John Bolton, Esq., presided.

SPEECH

ON MONDAY, THE 10TH OF JANUARY, 1814, AT THE
LIVERPOOL ARMS HOTEL, AFTER HIS HEALTH HAD
BEEN DRUNK.

GENTLEMEN,

As your guest, I thank you, from my heart, for the honourable and affectionate reception which you have given me. As the representative of Liverpool, I am most happy in meeting my constituents again, after a year's experience of each other, and a year's separation; a year, the most eventful in the annals of the world, and comprising, within itself, such a series of stupendous changes as might have filled the history of an age.

Gentlemen, you have been so good as to couple with my name the expression of your acknowledgments for the attention which I have paid to the interests of your town. You, Gentlemen, I have no doubt, recollect the terms upon which I entered into your service; and you are aware, therefore,

that I claim no particular acknowledgment at your hands for attention to the interests of Liverpool, implicated as they are with the general interests of the country. I trust, at the same time, that I have not been wanting to all or to any of you, in matters of local or individual concern. But I should not do fairly by you, if I were not to take this opportunity of saying, that a service (which, certainly, I will not pretend to describe as without some burden in itself) has been made light to me, beyond all example, by that institution which your munificence and provident care have established: I mean, the office in London, through which your correspondence with your members is now carried on. I had no pretension, Gentlemen, to this singular mark of your consideration: but neither will it, I hope, be thought presumptuous in me to confess, that I might not have been able to discharge the service which I owe you in a way which would have satisfied my own feelings as well as yours—that I might, in spite of all my endeavours, have been guilty of occasional omissions, if I had not been provided with some such medium of communication with my constituents. Of an absent and meritorious individual it is as pleasing as it is just to speak well: and I do no more than justice to the gentleman* whom you have appointed to

* Mr. John Backhouse.

conduct the office in question, (with whom I had no previous acquaintance,) in bearing public testimony to his merit, and in assuring you, that it would be difficult to find any one who would surpass him in zeal, intelligence, and industry.

Having despatched what it was necessary for me to say on these points, I know, Gentlemen, that it is your wish, and I feel it to be my duty, that I should now proceed to communicate to you my sentiments on the state of public affairs, with the same frankness which has hitherto distinguished all our intercourse with each other. That duty is one which it does not now require any effort of courage to perform. To exhort to sacrifices, to stimulate to exertion, to shame despondency, to divert from untimely concession, is a duty of a sterner sort, which you found me not backward to discharge, at a period when, from the shortness of our acquaintance, I was uncertain whether my freedom might not offend you. My task of to-day is one at which no man can take offence. It is to mingle my congratulations with your rejoicings on the events which have passed and are passing in the world.

If, in contemplating events so widely (I had almost said so tremendously) important, it be pardonable to turn one's view, for a moment, to local and partial considerations, I may be permitted to observe, that, while to Great Britain, while to all Europe, while to the world and to posterity, the

events which have recently taken place are matter of unbounded and universal joy, there is no collection of individuals who are better entitled than the company now assembled in this room (in great part, I presume, identically the same, and altogether representing the same interests and feelings as that of which I took leave, in this room, about fourteen months ago) to exult in the present state of things, and to derive from it, in addition to their share of the general joy, a distinct and special satisfaction.

We cannot forget, Gentlemen, the sinister omens and awful predictions under which we met and parted in October, 1812. The penalty denounced upon you for your election of me was, embarrassment to the rich and famine to the poor. I was warned, that, when I should return to renew my acquaintance with my constituents, I should find the grass growing in your streets. In spite of that denunciation, you did me the honour to elect me; in spite of that warning, I venture to meet you here again. It must be fairly confessed, that this is not the season of the year to estimate correctly the amount of superfluous and unprofitable vegetation with which your streets may be teeming; but, without presuming to limit the power of productive nature, it is at least satisfactory to know, that the fields have not been starved to clothe your quays with verdure; that it is not by economizing in the

scantiness of the harvest that nature has reserved her vigour for the pastures of your Exchange.

But, Gentlemen, I am sure you feel with me, that these are topics which I treat with levity only because they are not, nor were, at the time when they were seriously urged, susceptible of a serious argument: they did not furnish grounds on which any man would rest his appeal to your favour, or on which your choice of any man could be justified. If I have condescended to revert to them at all, it is because I would leave none of those recollections untouched which the comparison of our last meeting with the present, I know, suggests to your minds as well as to my own; and because I would, so far as in me lies, endeavour to banish from all future use, by exposing their absurdity, topics which are calculated only to mislead and to inflame. That the seasons would have run their appointed course, that the sun would have shone with as genial a warmth, and the showers would have fallen with as fertilizing a moisture, if you had not chosen me for your representative, is an admission which I make without much apprehension of the consequence. Nor do I wish you to believe, that your choice of any other than me would have delayed the return of your prosperity, or prevented the revival of your commerce.

I make these admissions without fear, so far as concerns the choice between individuals. But

I do not admit, that it was equally indifferent upon what principles that choice should be determined. I do not admit, that, if the principles which it was then recommended to you to countenance had unfortunately prevailed in Parliament, and, through the authority of Parliament, had been introduced into the counsels of the country, they would not have interfered with fatal operation, not indeed to arrest the bounty of Providence, to turn back the course of the seasons, and to blast the fertility of the earth, but to stop that current of political events which, "taken at the flood," has placed England at the head of the world.

Gentlemen, if I had met you here again on this day in a state of public affairs as doubtful as that in which we took leave of each other; if confederated nations had been still arrayed against this country, and the balance of Europe still trembling in the scale, I should not have hesitated now, as I did not hesitate then, to declare my decided and unalterable opinion, that perseverance, under whatever difficulties, under whatever privations, afforded the only chance of prosperity to you, because the only chance of safety to your country; and the only chance of safety to the country, because the only chance of deliverance to Europe. Gentlemen, I should be ashamed to address you now in the tone of triumph, if I had not addressed you then in that

of exhortation. I should be ashamed to appear before you shouting in the train of success, if I had not looked you in the face and encouraged you to patience under difficulties. It is because my acquaintance with you commenced in times of peril and embarrassment, and because I then neither flattered nor deceived you, that I now not only offer to you my congratulations, but put in my claim to yours, on the extinction of that peril, on the termination of that embarrassment, and on the glorious issue to which exertion and endurance have brought that great struggle in which our honour and our happiness were involved.

Gentlemen, during the course of a political life, nearly coeval with the commencement of the war, I have never given one vote, I have never uttered one sentiment, which had not for its object the consummation now happily within our view.

I am not ashamed, and it is not unpleasing or unprofitable, to look back upon the dangers which we have passed, and to compare them with the scene which now lies before us. We behold a country, inferior in population to most of her continental neighbours, but multiplying her faculties and resources by her own activity and enterprise, by the vigour of her constitution, and by the good sense of her people,—we behold her, after standing up against a formidable foe,

throughout a contest, in the course of which every one of her allies, and, at times, all of them together, have fainted and failed—nay, have been driven to combine with the enemy against her,—we behold her, at this moment, rallying the nations of Europe to one point, and leading them to decisive victory.

If such a picture were merely the bright vision of speculative philosophy, if it were presented to us in the page of the history of ancient times, it would stir and warm the heart. But, Gentlemen, this country is our own; and what must be the feelings which arise, on such a review, in the bosom of every son of that country? What must be the feelings of a community such as I am now addressing, which constitutes no insignificant part of the strength of the nation so described; which has suffered largely in her privations, and may hope to participate proportionably in her reward? What (I may be permitted to add) must be the feelings of one who is chosen to represent that community, and who finds himself in that honourable station at the moment of triumph, only because he discountenanced despair in the moment of despondency?

From the contemplation of a spectacle so mighty and magnificent as this, I should disdain to turn aside to the controversies of party. Of principles, however, it is impossible not to say something; because our triumph would be

incomplete, and its blessings might be transient, if we could be led astray by any sophistry ; if we could consent, in a sort of compromise of common joy, to forget or to mistate the causes from which that triumph has sprung. All of one mind, I trust and believe, we are, in exulting at the success of our country ; all of one mind, I trust, we now are throughout this land, in determining to persevere, if need be, in strenuous exertion to prosecute, and, I hope, to perfect the great work so happily in progress. But we know, that there are some of those who share most heartily in the public exultation, who yet ascribe effects, which happily cannot be disputed, to causes which may justly be denied. No tenderness for disappointed prophecies, Gentlemen, ought to induce us thus to disconnect effect and cause. It would lead to errors which might be dangerous, if unwarily adopted and generally received.

We have heard, for instance, that the war has now been successful, because the principles on which the war was undertaken have been renounced ; that we are, at length, blessed with victory, because we have thrown away the banner under which we entered into the contest ; that the contest was commenced with one set of principles, but that the issue has been happily brought about by the adoption of another. Gentlemen, I know of no such change. If we have succeeded, it has not been by the renunciation, but by the

prosecution of our principles: if we have succeeded, it has not been by adopting new maxims of policy, but by upholding, under all varieties of difficulty and discouragement, old, established, inviolable principles of conduct.

We are told, that this war has, of late, become *a war of the people*, and that, by the operation of that change alone, the power of imperial France has been baffled and overcome. Nations, it is said, have, at length, made common cause with their sovereigns, in a contest which, heretofore, had been a contest of sovereigns only. Gentlemen, the fact of the change might be admitted, without, therefore, admitting the argument. It does not follow, that the people were not at all times equally interested in the war, (as those who think as I do have always contended that they were,) because it may be and must be admitted, that the people, in many countries, were for a time deluded. They who argue against us, say, that jarring interests have been reconciled. We say, that gross delusions have been removed. Both admit the fact, that sovereigns and their people *are* identified. But it is for them who contend that this has been effected by change of principles to specify the change. What change of principles or of government has taken place among the nations of Europe? We are the best judges of ourselves—what change has taken place *here*? Is the constitution other than it was,

when we were told, (as we often were told in the bad times,) that it was a doubt whether it were worth defending? Is the constitution other than it was, when we were warned that peace on any terms must be made, as the only hope of saving it from popular indignation and popular reform?

There is yet another question to be asked. By what power, in what part of the world, has that final blow been struck which has smitten the tyrant to the ground? I suppose, by some enlightened republic; by some recently regenerated government of pure philanthropy and uncorrupted virtue: I suppose, by some nation which, in the excess of popular freedom, considers even a representative system as defective, unless each individual interferes directly in the national concerns; some nation of enlightened patriots, every man of whom is a politician in the coffee-house, as well as in the senate: I suppose it is from some such government as this that the conqueror of autocrats, the sworn destroyer of monarchical England, has met his doom. I look through the European world, Gentlemen, in vain: I find there no such august community. But in another hemisphere I do find such a one, which, no doubt, must be the political David by whom the Goliath of Europe has been brought down. What is the name of that glorious republic, to which the gratitude of Europe is eternally due,—which, from its innate hatred to tyranny,

has so perseveringly exerted itself to liberate the world, and, at last, has successfully closed the contest? Alas, Gentlemen, such a republic I do indeed find; but I find it enlisted, and (God be thanked!) enlisted alone, under the banner of the despot. But where was the blow struck? Where? Alas for theory! In the wilds of despotic Russia. It was followed up on the plains of Leipzig—by Russian, Prussian, and Austrian arms.

But let me not be mistaken. Do I, therefore, mean to contend—do I, therefore, give to our antagonists in the argument the advantage of ascribing to us the base tenet, that an absolute monarchy is better than a free government? God forbid! What I mean is this, that, in appreciating the comparative excellence of political institutions, in estimating the force of national spirit, and the impulses of national feeling, it is idle,—it is mere pedantry, to overlook the affections of nature. The order of nature could not subsist among mankind, if there were not an *instinctive* patriotism; I do not say unconnected with, but prior and paramount to, the desire of political amelioration. It may be very wrong that it should be so. I cannot help it. Our business is with fact. And, surely, it is not to be regretted, that tyrants and conquerors should have learned, from the lessons of experience, that the first consideration suggested to the

inhabitant of any country, by a foreign invasion, is, not whether the political constitution of the state be faultlessly perfect or not ; but, whether the altar at which he has worshipped,—whether the home in which he has dwelt from his infancy,—whether his wife and his children,—whether the tombs of his forefathers,—whether the palace of the sovereign, under whom he was born, and to whom he, therefore, owes (or, if it must be so stated, fancies that he, therefore, owes) allegiance, shall be abandoned to violence and profanation ?

That, in the infancy of the French revolution, many nations in Europe were, unfortunately, led to believe and to act upon a different persuasion, is undoubtedly true ; that whole countries were overrun by reforming conquerors, and flattered themselves with being proselytes till they found themselves victims. Even in this country, as I have already said, there have been times when we have been called upon to consider, whether there were not something at home which must be mended, before we could hope to repel a foreign invader with success.

It is fortunate for the world, that this question should have been tried, if I may so say, to a disadvantage ; that it should have been tried in countries where no man in his senses will say, that the frame of political society is such as, according to the most moderate principles of regulated

freedom, it ought to be;—where, I will venture to say, without hazarding the imputation of being myself a visionary reformer, political society is not such as, after the successes of this war, and from the happy contagion of the example of Great Britain, it is sure gradually to become. It is fortunate for the world, that this question should have been tried on its own merits; that, after twenty years of controversy, we should be authorized, by undoubted results, to revert to nature and to truth, and to disentangle the genuine feelings of the heart from the obstructions which a cold, presumptuous, generalizing philosophy had wound around them.

One of the most delightful poets of this country, in describing the various proportions of natural blessings and advantages dispensed by Providence to the various nations of Europe, turns from the luxuriant plains and cloudless skies of Italy to the rugged mountains of Switzerland, and inquires, whether there, also, in those barren and stormy regions, the “patriot passion” is found equally imprinted on the heart? He decides the question truly in the affirmative; and he says, of the inhabitant of those bleak wilds,

“ Dear is that shed to which his soul conforms,
And dear that hill which lifts him to the storms;
And, as a child, when scaring sounds molest,
Clings close and closer to the mother’s breast,
So the loud torrent and the whirlwind’s roar
But bind him to his native mountains more.”

What Goldsmith thus beautifully applied to the physical varieties of soil and climate, has been found no less true with respect to political institutions. A sober desire of improvement, a rational endeavour to redress error, and to correct imperfection in the political frame of human society, are not only natural, but laudable in man. But it is well that it should have been shown, by irrefragable proof, that these sentiments, even where most strongly and most justly felt, supersede not that devotion to native soil which is the foundation of national independence. And it is right that it should be understood and remembered, that the spirit of national independence alone, aroused where it had slumbered, enlightened where it had been deluded, and kindled into enthusiasm by the insults and outrages of an all-grasping invader, has been found sufficient, without internal changes and compromises of sovereigns or governments with their people—without relaxations of allegiance and abjurations of authority, to animate, as with one pervading soul, the different nations of the continent; to combine, as into one congenial mass, their various feelings, passions, prejudices; to direct these concentrated energies, with one impulse, against the common tyrant; and to shake (and, may we not hope? to overthrow) the *Babel* of his iniquitous power.

Gentlemen, there is another argument, more peculiarly relating to our own country, which

has, at times, been interposed to discourage the prosecution of the war. That this country is sufficient to its own defence, sufficient to its own happiness, sufficient to its own independence; and that the complicated combinations of continental policy are always hazardous to our interests as well as burdensome to our means, has been, at several periods of the war, a favourite doctrine, not only with those who, for other reasons, wished to embarrass the measures of the government, but with men of the most enlightened minds, of the most benevolent views, and the most ardent zeal for the interests as well as the honour of their country. May we not flatter ourselves, that, upon this point also, experience has decided in favour of the course of policy which has been actually pursued?

Can any man now look back upon the trial which we have gone through, and maintain, that, at any period during the last twenty years, the plan of insulated policy could have been adopted, without having, in the event, at this day, prostrated England at the foot of a conqueror? Great, indeed, has been the call upon our exertions; great, indeed, has been the drain upon our resources; long and wearisome has the struggle been; and late is the moment at which peace is brought within our reach. But, even though the difficulties of the contest may have been enhanced, and its duration protracted by it, yet, is there any

man who seriously doubts, whether the having associated our destinies with the destinies of other nations be or be not that which, under the blessing of Providence, has eventually secured the safety of all?

It is at the moment when such a trial has come to its issue, that it is fair to ask of those who have suffered under the pressure of protracted exertion, (and of whom rather than of those who are assembled around me—for by whom have such privations been felt more sensibly?)—it is now, I say, the time to ask, whether, at any former period of the contest, such a peace could have been made as would at once have guarded the national interests and corresponded with the national character? I address myself now to such persons only as think the character of a nation an essential part of its strength, and, consequently, of its safety. But if, among persons of that description, there be one who, with all his zeal for the glory of his country, has yet, at times, been willing to abandon the contest in mere weariness and despair, of such a man I would ask, whether he can indicate the period at which he now wishes that such an abandonment had been consented to by the Government and the Parliament of Great Britain?

Is it when the continent was at peace; when, looking upon the map of Europe, you saw one mighty and connected system, one great

luminary, with his attendant satellites circulating around him ; at that period could this country have made peace, and have remained at peace for a twelvemonth ? What is the answer ? Why, that the experiment was tried. The result was the renewal of the war.

Was it at a later period, when the continental system had been established ? when two-thirds of the ports of Europe were shut against you ? when but a single link was wanting to bind the continent in a circling chain of iron, which should exclude you from intercourse with other nations ? At that moment peace was most earnestly recommended to you. At that moment, Gentlemen, I first came among you. At that moment I ventured to recommend to you perseverance, patient perseverance ; and to express a hope, that, by the mere strain of an unnatural effort, the massive bonds imposed upon the nations of the continent might, at no distant period, burst asunder. I was heard by you with indulgence ; I know not whether with conviction. But is it now to be regretted, that we did not, at that moment, yield to the pressure of our wants, or of our fears ? What has been the issue ? The continental system was completed, with the sole exception of Russia, in the year 1812. In that year the pressure upon this country was undoubtedly painful. Had we yielded, the system would have been immortal. We persevered, and, before the

conclusion of another year, the system was at an end: at an end, as all schemes of violence naturally terminate, not by a mild and gradual decay, such as waits upon a regular and well-spent life, but by sudden dissolution: at an end, like the breaking up of a winter's frost. But yesterday the whole continent, like a mighty plain covered with one mass of ice, presented to the view a drear expanse of barren uniformity: to-day, the breath of heaven unbinds the earth; the streams begin to flow again; and the intercourse of human kind revives.

Can we regret that we did not, like the fainting traveller, lie down to rest—but, indeed, to perish—under the severity of that inclement season? Did we not more wisely, to bear up, and to wait the change?

Gentlemen, I have said, that I should be ashamed, and in truth I should be so, to address you in the language of exultation, if it were merely for the indulgence, however legitimate, of an exuberant and ungovernable joy. But they who have suffered great privations have a claim not merely to consolation, but to something more. They are justly to be compensated for what they have undergone, or lost, or hazarded, by the contemplation of what they have gained.

We have gained, then, a rank and authority in Europe, such as, for the life of the longest liver of those who now hear me, must place this country

upon an eminence which no probable reverses can shake. We have gained, or rather we have recovered, a splendour of military glory, which places us by the side of the greatest military nations in the world. At the beginning of this war, while there was not a British bosom that did not beat with rapture at the exploits of our navy, there were few who would not have been contented to compromise for that reputation alone; to claim the sea as exclusively our province, and to leave to France and the other continental powers the struggle for superiority by land. That fabled deity, whom I see portrayed upon the wall,* was considered as the exclusive patron of British prowess in battle; but, in seeming accordance with the beautiful fiction of ancient mythology, our Neptune, in the heat of contest, smote the earth with his trident, and upsprang the fiery war-horse, the emblem of military power.

Let Portugal, now led to the pursuit of her flying conquerors,—let liberated Spain,—let France, invaded in her turn by those whom she had overrun or menaced with invasion, attest the triumphs of the army of Great Britain, and the equality of her military with her naval fame! And let those who, even after the triumphs of the Peninsula had begun, while they admitted that

* A figure of Neptune.

we had indeed wounded the giant in the heel, still deemed the rest of his huge frame invulnerable,—let them now behold him reeling under the blows of united nations, and acknowledge, at once, the might of British arms and the force of British example!

I do not say, that these are considerations with a view to which the war, if otherwise terminable, ought to have been purposely protracted; but I say, that, upon the retrospect, we have good reason to rejoice, that the war was not closed ingloriously and insecurely, when the latter events of it have been such as have established our security by our glory.

I say, we have reason to rejoice, that, during the period when the continent was prostrate before France—that, especially during the period when the continental system was in force, we did not shrink from the struggle; that we did not make peace for present and momentary ease, unmindful of the permanent safety and greatness of this country; that we did not leave unsolved the momentous questions, whether this country could maintain itself against France, unaided and alone; or with the continent divided; or with the continent combined against it: whether, when the wrath of the tyrant of the European world was kindled against us with sevenfold fury, we could or could not walk, unharmed and unfettered, through the flames?

I say, we have reason to rejoice, that, throughout this more than *Punick* war, in which it has so often been the pride of our enemy to represent herself as the Rome and England as the Carthage of modern times, (with, at least, this colour for the comparison, that the utter destruction of the modern Carthage has uniformly been proclaimed to be indispensable to the greatness of her rival,) —we have, I say, reason to rejoice, that, unlike our assigned prototype, we have not been diverted by internal dissensions from the vigorous support of a vital struggle; that we have not suffered distress nor clamour to distract our counsels, or to check the exertions of our arms.

Gentlemen, for twenty years that I have sat in Parliament, I have been an advocate of the war. You knew this when you did me the honour to choose me as your representative. I then told you, that I was the advocate of the war, because I was a lover of peace; but of a peace that should be the fruit of honourable exertion, a peace that should have a character of dignity, a peace that should be worth preserving, and should be likely to endure. I confess, I was not sanguine enough, at that time, to hope that I should so soon have an opportunity of justifying my professions. But I know not why, six weeks hence, such a peace should not be made as England may not only be glad, but proud to ratify. Not such a peace, Gentlemen, as that of

Amiens—a short and feverish interval of unrefreshing repose. During that peace, which of you went, or sent a son to Paris, who did not feel or learn, that an Englishman appeared, in France, shorn of the dignity of his country; with the mien of a suppliant, and the conscious prostration of a man who had consented to purchase his gain or his ease by submission? But let a peace be made to-morrow, such as the allies have now the power to dictate, and the meanest of the subjects of this kingdom shall not walk the streets of Paris without being pointed out as the compatriot of Wellington; as one of that nation, whose firmness and perseverance have humbled France and rescued Europe.

Is there any man, that has a heart in his bosom, who does not find, in the contemplation of this contrast alone, a recompense for the struggles and the sufferings of years?

But, Gentlemen, the doing right is not only the most honourable course of action; it is also the most profitable in its result. At any former period of the war, the independence of almost all the other countries, our allies, would have been to be purchased with sacrifices profusely poured out from the lap of British victory. Not a throne to be re-established, not a province to be evacuated, not a garrison to be withdrawn, but this country would have had to make compensation, out of her conquests, for the concessions obtained from

the enemy. Now, happily, this work is already done, either by our efforts or to our hands. The Peninsula free; the lawful commonwealth of European states already, in a great measure, restored, Great Britain may now appear in the congress of the world, rich in conquests, nobly and rightfully won, with little claim upon her faith or her justice, whatever may be the spontaneous impulse of her generosity or her moderation.

Such, Gentlemen, is the situation and prospect of affairs at the moment at which I have the honour to address you. That you, Gentlemen, may have your full share in the prosperity of your country, is my sincere and earnest wish. The courage with which you bore up in adverse circumstances eminently entitles you to this reward.

For myself, Gentlemen, while I rejoice in your returning prosperity, I rejoice also that our connexion began under auspices so much less favourable; that we had an opportunity of knowing each other's minds in times when the minds of men are brought to the proof,—times of trial and difficulty. I had the satisfaction of avowing to you, and you the candour and magnanimity to approve, the principles and opinions by which my public conduct has uniformly been guided, at a period when the soundness of those opinions, and the application of those principles, was matter of doubt and controversy. I thought, and

I said, at the time of our first meeting, that the cause of England and of civilized Europe must be ultimately triumphant, if we but preserved our spirit untainted and our constancy unshaken. Such an assertion was, at that time, the object of ridicule with many persons: a single year has elapsed, and it is now the voice of the whole world.

Gentlemen, we may, therefore, confidently indulge the hope, that our opinions will continue in unison; that our concurrence will be as cordial as it has hitherto been, if, unhappily, any new occasion of difficulty or embarrassment should hereafter arise.

At the present moment, I am sure, we are equally desirous to bury the recollection of all our differences with others in that general feeling of exultation in which all opinions happily combine.

SPEECH

ON THE SAME OCCASION, AFTER "THE IMMORTAL MEMORY OF THE RIGHT HONOURABLE WILLIAM PITT, WHOSE SYSTEM AND PRINCIPLES ARE LEADING THE CONTEST TO SO GLORIOUS AN ISSUE," HAD BEEN DRUNK.

GENTLEMEN,

IN the enjoyments of social or domestic life, there is no man who has not occasionally felt a sensation of regret for the absence of some dear friend, with whom he would have been delighted to have shared them. This feeling, Gentlemen, which we have all experienced in the circle of our families, I am sure we all experience at the present moment, in reference to the great name which has just been brought before us.

Gentlemen, we know that, up to the period at which, by the blessing of Providence, the late auspicious change has taken place in the affairs of the world, in every moment of public distress the name of that great man has been brought forward, by his political enemies, as the source of all the sufferings and the origin of all the difficulties which we have undergone.

"The evil that men do lives after them,
'The good is oft interred with their bones:'"

So let it *not* be with Mr. Pitt! If enmity is still alive and active against him, let those who admired him when living acknowledge, in the events of this time, the fruits of his long and anxious labours; and, while reposing under the safety to which those labours have ultimately led, let them mingle with the enjoyment of that repose a grateful recollection of him to whom they are indebted for it.

It seldom happens that great men reap, during their lives, the full harvest of all their toils. Contentions, passions interpose: and the complete operation of a system is not always seen, and is seldomer acknowledged, while the author of it is an object of rivalry or of envy. But when the history of these times comes to be read; when events are traced to their causes, posterity will acknowledge, with one voice, that to the stand made by Mr. Pitt in the early period of the French revolution, and to the uniform firmness of his counsels, Great Britain is indebted for her present elevation, and Europe for the security which she is now about to enjoy.



SPEECHES

DURING

THE ELECTION OF 1816.

INTRODUCTION.

THE disappointment of the defeated party was so great at the first return of Mr. Canning for this borough, that it was to be expected, both from their hostility to his known principles, and out of revenge for their own failure, that every thing which ingenuity could turn against his public conduct would be urged to lower his popularity in the town. His visit to Lisbon and his appointment as ambassador to the court of Portugal afforded the wished-for themes ; but they were descanted on with a perversity of reasoning and a malignity of feeling the very extravagance of which destroyed the intended effect.

When it was known, that Mr. Canning had accepted office, and that he would once more appear in Liverpool to solicit the suffrages of his

constituents, these topics were again urged upon the freemen with increased zeal and acrimony, and to them were added every kind of crimination which could be drawn from public principles, and the old common-places of corruption—pensions, places, war, peace, and public distress. The difficulty, however, was to find a candidate to oppose Mr. Canning, and, as none offered, his opponents determined to choose one themselves. On Monday, the 3d of June, a committee met, and fixed upon Mr. Leyland; a gentleman whose political principles were, upon many points, totally at variance with their own. The freemen were immediately called together, when, after several stimulating harangues, it was proposed that a requisition should be signed and presented to Mr. Leyland, to induce him to offer himself as a candidate. On Tuesday, the 4th, this requisition was conveyed to that gentleman, who promised to give the subject consideration; and next morning he issued an address to the freemen, in which he declined to comply with the wishes of the requisitionists.

The disappointment produced by this refusal was but transitory. It was resolved to use Mr.

Leyland's name without his authority ; and on Friday, the 7th, he was put in nomination by the Rev. William Shepherd, seconded by Colonel Williams, both of whom addressed the freemen, and arraigned the public conduct of Mr. Canning. The election immediately commenced ; and, at half-past ten, the voters for the *name* of Mr. Leyland having so slackened that all hope of success was abandoned, Mr. Shepherd, who was on the hustings, addressed the Mayor (Sir William Barton, Knt.) in the following terms :

“ MR. MAYOR,

“ IT is well known to you, perhaps it is well known to Mr. Canning and to the generality of this assembly, that I reside at a distance from town, and, of course, have not many opportunities of knowing the exact state of public feeling amongst its inhabitants. Yesterday a deputation of freemen waited on me, giving me an account of the disposition of the people to vote for Mr. Leyland, which I do not find realized. I already see, that our cause is hopeless. In these circumstances, I owe it in respect to you, in respect to this assembly, and, permit me to

add, in respect to the right honourable gentleman, to withdraw from the contest. I confess, I am sorry that the issue of that contest is the seating of the right honourable gentleman ; but I console myself with the recollection, that, whatever may be the right honourable gentleman's line of politics, our representation will be adorned by his talents. Of course, Sir, I compromise no one's rights by thus withdrawing ; but I pledge myself to this, that I shall take no further part in the present election, in any shape whatever."

Mr. Canning, upon this, addressed the Mayor in a few words, declaring his readiness to do justice to the frank and honourable manner in which the reverend gentleman had intimated his intention of withdrawing his interference from the contest ; and, with an expression of the most affecting cordiality, advanced to Mr. Shepherd, and shook hands with him.

Mr. Shepherd then courteously took leave of Mr. Canning, and left the hustings. The affair appeared concluded ; but, after a pause of half an hour, the polling was resumed. Though some of the heads of the party had deserted, the passions

of the mob had been too highly wrought up to subside at the fiat of those who had excited them; and, though without any ultimate hope of success, and evidently for the purpose of putting their opponents to unnecessary expense, the election was kept open. The faction, unreined from that control which a respect for character and propriety might have imposed upon them, and goaded on by the most inflammatory harangues, insignia, and handbills, became exceedingly tumultuous, and interrupted, by repeated acts of violence, the tranquillity of the town, and endangered the lives of the peaceable inhabitants. The excesses committed by the mob on this occasion are alluded to in several of the subsequent speeches.

On Wednesday, the 12th, this disgraceful contest, which was hopeless from its very commencement, and which was protracted only for the purpose of annoying Mr. Canning and his friends, was abandoned, and the right honourable gentleman declared duly elected.

The speeches included in the following series were, except the two spoken on the hustings,

delivered from the balcony of the house of John Bolton, Esq., in Duke-street. Most of those in the first series were delivered from the house of John Gladstone, Esq., whose residence was then in Rodney-street. Mr. Canning was the guest of Mr. Gladstone, during the election of 1812; and of Mr. Bolton, during the subsequent elections.

SPEECH

ON HIS ARRIVAL IN LIVERPOOL, ON WEDNESDAY, THE
5TH OF JUNE, 1816.

GENTLEMEN,

MY first duty and my first inclination is, to thank you for your kindness,—to thank you for the indulgence which I have received at your hands. And I do assure you, Gentlemen, that, if there is any thing which I regret on the immediate occasion which brings me at this moment before you, it is, that I am now standing here for the double purpose of soliciting a new favour, as well as of acknowledging those which I have already experienced from you.

I had much rather that it should have happened, that my first visit to my constituents, after my return to England, should have been purely for the purpose of expressing my gratitude, and with no prospective object whatever.

It was my intention to have paid that visit for that purpose; and I am not responsible for the circumstance which has added another duty to that which I intended to perform.

Gentlemen, amongst the motives of regret which belong to my late absence from England, I am happy to feel assured, that I have not to reckon any neglect of your interests, general or individual. It is, indeed, a satisfaction to me to know, that, during my absence, in all that respects your interests, no want of me has been felt; and that, in addition to the zeal and activity of my worthy colleague, there has been, on the part of others of my friends, a constant and undeviating attention to all your concerns.

Gentlemen, if there are any of my constituents who think that they have, upon any other ground, cause of complaint against me, I may take it for granted, that many hours will not elapse before I hear it; and, when I hear it, you may rest assured, that I shall be ready to answer it, I trust to their satisfaction.

Gentlemen, after thanking you, it is my next duty, as I have said, to solicit a renewal of your confidence. I trust I have not forfeited it by receiving a mark of the confidence of the Crown.

Gentlemen, I can truly and conscientiously declare to you, that that mark of the confidence of the Crown has come to me as much unsought

as it must, from obvious circumstances, have been unforeseen.*

Of a life in Parliament, now of more than twenty years' duration, I have passed more than half, and that of my own choice, out of office. I have oftener had occasion to justify my resignation or refusal than my acceptance of official situation. But, Gentlemen, as I have not given up or declined office, except for what I thought just and substantial reasons; so I do not think myself at liberty, as a public man, to decline it, when my services are called for by my Sovereign, and when I think I can honourably afford them.

Gentlemen, I have but one word more to say at this our first meeting. I have accepted the office to which his Royal Highness the Prince Regent has been graciously pleased to appoint me; but I have not yet performed the customary homage of kissing his Royal Highness's hand on that acceptance. With his Royal Highness's permission, I am here among my constituents, before I have stood in his presence.

Gentlemen, I have no difficulty in confessing, that I not only gratify my feelings, but court an advantage, in the respect which I thus pay to the popular branch of the constitution. I come before

* The tender of the Presidency of the Board of Control to Mr. Canning was made in consequence of the death of the Earl of Buckinghamshire.

you chosen a servant of the Crown. May I not hope, that you will send me back with that choice sanctioned by the people?

Gentlemen, I will now detain you no longer than while I repeat, what I have already said, that, without anticipating objections from any part of this great community, I shall, no doubt, have abundant opportunities, in the course of the next few days, of hearing all objections which it is possible to devise against me; and you will give me credit, Gentlemen, I am sure, that I shall neither omit nor avoid any occasion of replying to them.

SPEECH

BEFORE THE OPENING OF THE POLL, ON FRIDAY, THE 7TH
OF JUNE, 1816.

MR. MAYOR,

ANOTHER candidate having been nominated, and a poll demanded, it is not my intention to impede your proceedings more than a few moments.

If the catechism of the reverend gentleman who addressed you first, and the vehemence of the honourable colonel who seconded him, had taken the shape of an inquiry on what grounds I stand here as a candidate, and why I have done certain things which they impute to me; and if they had declared, that, upon my satisfactorily answering their interrogatories, they would consent to my re-election, I should have felt myself bound to give them, at once, distinct and categorical answers. But a manifesto of accusation, followed by an act of hostility, has no claim to such attention; and none shall it receive from me, in this place, and at this hour.

But let not the smile, which I see gathering on the face of my reverend accuser, and communicating itself, by sympathy, to that of his gallant friend,—let it not mature into a smile of triumph. I do assure the reverend gentleman, that I am obliged to him for the part which he has taken, and have certainly nothing to find fault with in him, as to the courtesy with which he has had the goodness to clothe his observations.

I have noted every word that has been said against me; I carry in my mind the whole indictment; and that indictment I will answer, point by point, when I address myself, after the poll, to those who have a right to hear my justification. I invite my two accusers to be present; and I assure them, on the faith of my

responsibility and honour, that they shall be received among my friends with every personal respect and civility.

To one point, and one point only, I will answer here.

The reverend gentleman refers to what he is good enough to describe as a laudable declaration on my part, at the close of the last election, when I declared myself to be the representative of the whole people of Liverpool. Now, I would appeal to every man who hears me,—to all who are now on these hustings,—to all who, from without, are looking hostilely at me, whether, in any application which they had occasion to make to me, or in any which they have known to be made to me, as member for Liverpool, any one man has ever found reason to think, from my manner of receiving such application, that I recollected to what party the applicant belonged. I would put the whole of my pretensions to support on that single issue; and, if that were decided against me, I could acquiesce in your preference of this shadow of a name which the mover and seconder have opposed to me.

With the reverend gentleman I have had no intercourse; but with respect to the honourable colonel who has seconded him, he may, I am sure, remember a correspondence which passed between us; and I appeal to him whether, in the course of that correspondence, he had to

complain of any want of courtesy on my part.—
 [The colonel bowed.] I hope I am not prone to
 overrate my own labours ; and yet I can assure
 him, that whatever other jobs the worthy colonel
 believes me to have had to do for others, I have not
 had any harder task imposed upon me than that
 of reading his letters on parliamentary reform.

SPEECH

AT THE CLOSE OF THE FIRST DAY'S POLL, THE 7TH OF
 JUNE, 1816.

GENTLEMEN,

OF all the contested elections in which you have
 been called to bear a part, and, certainly, of all
 those of which I have ever heard, the circum-
 stances of the present are the most extraordinary.
 A battle without an antagonist ; and a surrender
 without a cessation of hostilities !

Gentlemen, in most struggles it has been suf-
 ficient for him who came into the field that he
 had nobody to oppose him. But this has not

been my fortune on the present occasion. Our first victory has been from want of a combatant: our next has been over the unacknowledged representative of the combatant whom our adversaries could not bring forward. And, having defeated the representative, who would not fight, we have now to fight the self-constituted substitutes who have thrust themselves in the place which he becomingly abandoned.

Gentlemen, in this fruitless and unnecessary contest, we have, however, obtained a victory that might put to flight the most substantial antagonist. I am assured, that the majority which we possess on this day is unexampled, for a first day's poll, in any contest for Liverpool. We have polled, Gentlemen, 250. There have polled for my antagonist—I beg pardon, I should rather say, in spite of my antagonist—159; the result is a majority of 91 in our favour.

Of the gentleman whose name is thus unwarrantably put forward against his own desire, I beg not to be understood as meaning to speak with the slightest disrespect. Of the gentleman who constituted himself the representative of the nonjuring candidate, I mean Mr. Shepherd, I have to say, that his conduct appears to me to have been, in all that I have seen of it, not only exempt from blame, but entitled to the praise of fairness, honour, and liberality. But who they are that, after the abjuration of the principal, and

after the abdication of the substitute, have put themselves in array against the declared sense of all parties, to vex and harass the population of this great town, and who hazard thus, for no object and to no end, all the results which may arise from the fermentation which they have excited, it behoves me not to conjecture; nor will I characterize their proceedings with the epithet that I think they deserve.

Gentlemen, I told you, on our first meeting, that I should, no doubt, be catechised sufficiently when I met my antagonists face to face. That meeting has taken place this day; and I informed the gentlemen who, in moving and seconding this fruitless nomination, thought proper to arraign my public conduct, that, if they would do me the honour to accompany me home this evening, they should have whatever advantage they might fancy they could derive from hearing my answers to all that they had alleged against me.

I do not blame them, Gentlemen, if they have not availed themselves of my offer: they must consider the contest at an end; and I am perfectly satisfied, that their attacks were not directed against me with any personal hostility, but were only intended to influence your suffrages.

Gentlemen, if there were any truth (truth, I mean, in argument) in the grounds which were stated for inducing you to reject me on the present occasion, I will venture to say, that the

admission of them would tend to a complete change in the constitution.

Gentlemen, it was contended, that any man holding office, especially high and responsible office, was unfit, for that very reason, to become the representative of the people.—[Cries of “No! no!”] I state the argument, Gentlemen, only for the purpose of answering it,—of expressing, though in much feebler language, the just and emphatic refutation which it has received in your unanimous denial.

Gentlemen, if there be truth in this doctrine of our adversaries, I have read the constitution wrong. For I have always thought, that it was one great practical security for the continuance of that freedom which we happily enjoy, and of which we should enjoy the name only, if it were not embodied in the political institutions of the country;—I have considered it always, I say, as one great security, that, though there be no written law which circumscribes the choice of the Crown in the selection of its ministers, yet that, since England has been what it is, the Sovereign has always looked for his ministers among the members of the two Houses of Parliament.

Is it possible, Gentlemen, that persons of so acute understandings as those who were arrayed against me to-day, should not see, that if a minister ought not to be a member of Parliament,

the converse would be equally true, that the Crown ought not to choose a member of Parliament for its minister? And what would be the consequence? That the House of Lords, the hereditary counsellors of the Crown, and hereditary representatives of the great mass of the property of the kingdom; that the House of Commons, containing a selection, through various channels, and for various qualifications, of all that is most distinguished in talents, in property, and consideration, among the commons of the country; that these two bodies of men, necessarily, from their constitution, the flower of the kingdom, should be absolutely excluded from the management of the affairs of the state; and that the Crown should be driven to look for its servants among those who could not obtain, or among those who had declined, the representation of the people!

I take for granted, Gentlemen, that I do no injustice to the argument of my adversaries, when I assume, that it is meant to exclude members of the House of Peers, equally with those of the other House of Parliament, from office. If, indeed, they intend a distinction between the two houses, and would confine the offices of state to peers, pleasant candidates, to be sure, they are for popular favour, and nice adjusters of the balance of the constitution!

But there is another view which these gentlemen take of office,—as if it were something in itself dishonourable, something which did not imply or convey distinction, but absolute degradation and contamination. When they have said that a man holds office, or, still more, when, straining their faculties for ridicule and invective to the utmost pitch, they insinuate that he seeks it, they think that they have said all: the blow is struck, the work is done. Be it so. But let us see how far these gentlemen are consistent in their revilement of office. Is there no occasion on which they speak of it in another strain, and represent it in another light? Can they be the same persons whom you may have heard, on former occasions, declaiming against those laws by which a proportion of our fellow-subjects are excluded from office? They think, and, though I differ from many of you, Gentlemen, in this opinion, I think with them, that these disqualifications should be removed. I have done my best to procure the removal of them. In this *I* am consistent. *I* think ineligibility to office a grievance, because *I* think office an honourable occupation. But what is the creed of our adversaries? They ought, in consistency, to consider such ineligibility as a privilege rather than a privation. Is it tyranny to save a man from the danger of being degraded? Is it any thing but

a wise and salutary restraint, to fence him round against the chance of contamination ?

But, Gentlemen, I rest my appeal to you both upon the theory and practice of the constitution. I do not come before you an apologist for having accepted office. When tendered to me on the part of my Sovereign, it was my duty to accept it; unless I could assign sufficient public reasons for declining it, or felt in my own mind insuperable difficulties in acceptance. The country has, I conceive, a claim on the services of every man, according to the measure of his abilities. Of that measure he is not himself the proper judge; and the call of the Sovereign is paramount, where there is no justifiable motive for a refusal.

Gentlemen, whatever difficulties I may have felt on former occasions, when (for instance) at our first meeting I told you that I had twice declined office in the course of that year, public reasons I have none for declining office now; and motives of personal feeling, if then I had any, have long been wholly at an end.

Gentlemen, the next material charge against me, and it behoves me to meet it fairly, is on the score of my absence from you for the last eighteen months, and the situation which I held, during a part of that interval, at Lisbon.

With respect to the cause of my departure, and of my solicitation to my friends here to

accept my resignation, and supply my place, if they could not, consistently with the interests of the town, indulge me in a temporary absence, you are all apprized of the facts ; and I have to thank you all for your indulgence. I know, Gentlemen, that you believe me when I say, upon my honour, that my departure from England originated not in the slightest degree in any view to the appointment, which, indeed, was incidentally cast upon me after my private arrangements had been made. The moment that I learnt the Prince Regent of Portugal's determination not to return last year to his European dominions, I resigned. It is false, Gentlemen, as (I am told) is asserted, that I continued in a public capacity to the period of my leaving Lisbon. Of the seventeen months, or thereabouts, which I passed in Portugal, the last six months I was as private an individual as any among you, and it was no fault of mine that I was not much sooner superseded : it was in the month of April last year that I sent in my resignation. I remained there, according to my original intention, invested with no public character, discharging no public duty, and receiving, in consequence, no public pay. Nor can I imagine how the mistake (if mistake be the true name) could have arisen, as to my continuing in a public character, unless it were that, being settled in Lisbon, I did continue, long after the expiration of my public character, to receive such

of my countrymen as happened to come recommended to me, with such civility as the means of a private individual could allow.

Gentlemen, I am not aware that there have been any other objections urged against me which are not comprised, in substance, under one or other of these two heads,—the question of office, as it is now held by me; and the question of the office which I held at Lisbon.

The question which *you* have to decide is, whether you will now countenance a doctrine hitherto unknown to the constitution of this country,—the doctrine, that a man cannot serve at once the people and the Crown. We have always held, (meaning by *we* those who hold the principles which first brought you and me together)—*we* have always held, that the Crown, firmly upheld, and in the exercise of its legitimate, but restricted power, is the best safeguard for the liberties of the people; and that the lawful rights and just freedom of the people are the best foundations of the stability of the throne.

Whenever the opinions which have been brought forward to-day shall be adopted as the rule of your conduct, undoubtedly you and I must part. I need not say how much it is my wish to perpetuate our connexion. I trust it may coexist with the devotion of my services, whenever they are thought useful, to my country.

Gentlemen, I have detained you longer than

it was fitting to do. I have now only to solicit the continuance of your zeal in our unexampled struggle,—a struggle with an invisible phantom. Let us see whether, before the Sabbath, this phantom may not be laid.

SPEECH

AT THE CLOSE OF THE SECOND DAY'S POLL, THE 8TH OF
JUNE, 1816.

GENTLEMEN,

ALTHOUGH I am, undoubtedly, very much concerned to find, that the disturbed state of the town, consequent upon the vexatious protraction of the poll, is likely to be prolonged another day, it is some consolation to me, that I shall thereby have another opportunity of addressing you, which, in the midst of all that I see passing under my eyes, I could not do to-day, without hazarding the continuance of the irritation which now prevails.

I need not say how deeply I am affected by the attendance of that thronged multitude of respectable persons whom I now see before me.

But I think that I shall better consult your peace, and as well thereby your interests as my own, if I exhort you to return, as soon as possible, to your respective homes, and endeavour to preserve, or, rather, to restore the tranquillity of your neighbourhoods.

I cannot dismiss you, however, without mentioning the state of the day's poll. We have maintained our rate of superiority, and have, within two, *doubled* the majority of yesterday. By your exertions, I have the honour and satisfaction to stand 180 above my opponent.

Gentlemen, as yet we know not our antagonists, in any apparent or palpable shape; but they threaten us, on Monday next, with the rare advantage of an actual, visible, substantial candidate of flesh and blood.

The hope of so extraordinary a phenomenon must necessarily keep alive the enthusiasm of our hitherto visionary antagonists. You, Gentlemen, require no incitement to quicken your exertions; but, after having fought so manfully against a shadow, the promised substance will, I am sure, bring new energies into the field.

SPEECH

AT THE CLOSE OF THE THIRD DAY'S POLL, THE 10TH OF
JUNE, 1816.

GENTLEMEN,

IF I were addressing you only as a candidate, I should, indeed, be grieved at the scenes which I have just witnessed; but, as a brother freeman, I confess, I am ashamed of our town.

Gentlemen, what have they to answer for, who have created and who prolong this state of things, without any possible object, when a single word, fairly spoken out, would have the effect of putting an end to it!

Gentlemen, I know nothing of Mr. Leyland but his name; but I understand and believe him to be a gentleman of respectable character, of immense fortune, and of great influence in the town of Liverpool. Standing in such a situation, how can he bear that his name should be made a pretext of outrage and riot, which will couple the memory of his opposition (if it be his) with the disgrace of this great town?

Gentlemen, if there be any friend of Mr. Leyland's in this assembly, I earnestly wish that he

would go to Mr. Leyland from hence, would represent to him the scandalous scenes that have been passing, and call upon him manfully to come forward, and lend his aid towards checking the disorders which are committed in his name. If Mr. Leyland yet retains hope of success on the poll, let him appear in his own person on the hustings; but, if he persevere in the determination, which is ascribed to him, not even to avail himself of a majority, should he obtain one, nor, if elected your representative in Parliament, to serve, unless compelled by law, in God's name let him make an unequivocal and conclusive declaration to that effect; and, I presume, all contest must cease.

I have heard of men whose element is mischief and whose delight is in disturbance. Such, surely, cannot be the temper of Mr. Leyland. I have heard of those who, in pursuit of a tempting object, would not much scruple as to what measures they employed, or what evils they might occasion. But this is the first time in my life, that I have heard of a man who would risk the peace of the community of which he is a member, and in which he must have many friends, not for an object of his own desire, but for the acquisition of what, even if acquired, he would disdain. I trust, that such cannot be Mr. Leyland's intention. I cannot but believe, that, when truly informed of the state of the town, if he regards the good-

will of his neighbours; if he regards his duty as a magistrate, sworn to maintain that peace which is now so shamefully violated—I cannot help thinking, that, on a review of all these considerations, he will feel it his duty to appear to-morrow at the hustings, and to say, distinctly, intelligibly, and definitively, whether he does or does not take any interest in all that you are risking and enduring on his account.

Let Mr. Leyland come before you as a candidate, and, for myself, I am ready to receive him with all the respect which belongs to the character of your townsman, and with all the courtesy in which, I hope, I have never been wanting to any rival candidate for your favour. If, on the other hand, he comes forward to decline the contest, and declines it in so explicit a manner as to throw upon those who use his name, without his permission, such a responsibility as shall prevent them longer from sporting, as they have hitherto done, with the feelings and safety of the town, he will act the part of an upright magistrate and an honourable man. But if, pursuing neither of these intelligible lines of conduct, he continues to allow his name to be used for the purpose of keeping open a vexatious poll, and risking thereby the repetition of such excesses as we have this day witnessed,—upon him, in my conscience I think, lies the responsibility for all the mischief that may follow.

Gentlemen, I will not address you to-day on any other subject: but I cannot dismiss you without thanking you for the protection which you have this day given, not to me personally, because I have no reason to apprehend that to me any personal outrage was intended, but to those valuable friends of mine, your eminent fellow-townsmen, who accompanied me, and not a hair of whose heads I could bear to see injured in my cause. I trust, that the awakened activity of the magistracy will prevent the renewal of any call for your exertions in self-defence.

I will now add nothing more, except to communicate to you the state of the poll. We have improved greatly both the amount and the relative proportion of our majority of Saturday. I am 298 above (what I must call him, for want of any other term which would express more precisely the relation in which we stand to each other) my opponent.

SPEECH

AT THE CLOSE OF THE FOURTH DAY'S POLL, THE 11TH OF
JUNE, 1812.

GENTLEMEN,

I AM happy to address you to-day in the language of congratulation ; and, first, in respect to what was uppermost in my thoughts and feelings when I addressed you last night—the peace and tranquillity of the town.

Gentlemen, the magistrates have performed their duty in the most prompt and judicious manner ; and every one of you may return from this assembly to his home to-night, in the assurance, that his aid will not be wanted to repress tumult in the streets, and that his family will not be assailed in their chambers by the brutal fury of a drunken mob.

Gentlemen, it would be uncandid not to mention to you, that Mr. Leyland has this day attended in his place, to take his share of duty and responsibility as a magistrate ; and that he has thus lent his aid to the restoration of that tranquillity which had been disturbed by the use (or abuse) of his name, as a mock candidate for

your favour. Gentlemen, I am informed that Mr. Leyland has done more—that he has taken the opportunity, which his attendance as a magistrate afforded him, of renewing this day, in a more explicit and distinct form, the declaration, that he does *not* court your suffrages on the present occasion ; and that even if, contrary to all reasonable probability, he were to be returned, by an unsought and unwelcome majority, he would still decline to serve you. Gentlemen, I know of no law which would compel him to serve ; and the result, therefore, of such a return, could his friends (as they call themselves) have obtained it at the price which they were ready to pay for it, in the destruction of your peace and comfort, would have been to present to you the shadow of a candidate matured into the shadow of a representative !

But, Gentlemen, with Mr. Leyland I have done. He returns, by his declaration of this day, within the sacred pale of private life, into which God forbid that he or any man should be pursued by political hostility.

The legacy, however, which Mr. Leyland involuntarily leaves behind him, to the friends who have so just a claim upon his remembrance, is a persevering, though hopeless, contest. Hopeless, I am sure, you will agree with me in pronouncing it, when you know that the poll of this day has augmented my numbers to 1,200 ; an

amount unexampled (as I am informed) in a four days' poll at Liverpool; and that my majority over the votes polled—I know not for whom, disclaimed as they are by Mr. Leyland—the *thrown away* votes, I believe, I must call them—which was yesterday 298, is this day augmented to 494.

Gentlemen, what course our adversaries now mean to pursue, disowned as they are by the worthy gentleman in whose name they have so long attempted to delude you; whether they have some other invisible candidate to substitute in his room; some new *bottled conjurer*, whom they will invite you to see uncorked at the hustings, I cannot pretend to divine. But I would have you be prepared for continued exertion; for, though I and my friends near me are aware, that rumours of the complete abandonment of the contest are to be circulated this evening, we are aware also that the object of such rumours is to throw you off your guard, and, if possible, to get the start of you to-morrow. If my friends on the hustings to-day had listened to the insinuations which were conveyed to them, they would have believed the close of the poll to be at hand, and would have relaxed in those exertions which must, ultimately, make us triumphant. But they were too wary to be thus deceived. In another day, I have no doubt, we shall wring from the avowed necessities of our antagonists that success which, they

would fain have had us believe to-day, could only be the fruit of concession and compromise.

Gentlemen, after the close of the poll, another opportunity will occur, more favourable than the present, for the consideration of other topics, which I purposely omit during the continuance of the contest. I take leave of you for this evening; exhorting you to maintain that moderation which you have displayed hitherto, without, however, at all relaxing that firmness which has caused your moderation to be respected. The result which you desire cannot be long withholden from you; but your continued efforts are still necessary to secure it.

SPEECH

ON THE HUSTINGS, AT THE FINAL CLOSE OF THE POLL,
THE 12TH OF JUNE, 1816.

MR. MAYOR AND GENTLEMEN,

WHEN you recollect what took place on these hustings on the first day of the poll, upon Mr. Shepherd's handsome, but ineffectual retirement, you will not be surprised, that I should have

paused some time before I could believe the contest to be at length really concluded. Nor will it, I hope, be considered as ungracious on my part, if I do not profess myself to be at this moment at all affected by the same feelings which overpowered me when I addressed you on that occasion.

At the same time, I can assure the gentlemen who have been the instruments of prolonging this vexatious poll, that I entertain no resentment against them. They have been acting, no doubt, on a sense of duty, however mistaken: or, if politics and party have been the influencing motives of their conduct, I am well persuaded, that there has been nothing personal to me in their hostility, and that now, as in the memorable contest four years ago, the struggle has been a struggle of principles.

I rejoice the more in the victory; but without assuming to myself now, any more than in 1812, any personal share in the triumph.

In offering my acknowledgments to you, Mr. Mayor, and to the other officers concerned in the election, for their constant attention and activity; in returning my warmest thanks to my friends, for their unparalleled exertions in my behalf, I take leave of my opponents with the same declaration which I made on the close of the last election, that, once again member for Liverpool, no one of my constituents, who may have occasion

to apply to me in that character, shall find reason to believe, from my manner of receiving his application, that I recollect his conduct here, or bear in mind his political connexions.

SPEECH

AFTER HAVING BEEN CHAIRED, THE 12TH OF JUNE, 1816.

GENTLEMEN,

IF I could forget all the trouble and inconvenience which have been occasioned to you, and could contemplate the result of this day only as it affects myself, what reason should I not have to pour forth my gratitude to those men who have laboured against me with so vexatious an opposition ! For, with whatever spirit and design they may have acted, I will venture to affirm, that never did the most anxious and active friendship procure for any individual such a triumph as their hostility has earned for me this day. They laboured to separate us from each other ; and they have united us more closely than

before. They hoped to efface the memory of that victory which crowned your former exertions in my favour; and they have, if not effaced, yet thrown it into the shade, by the transcendent splendour of this day's triumph,—by the increased and overpowering demonstrations of your unwearied kindness and regard. Indebted to my opponents for the excitement which has called forth these demonstrations, what a heart must I have, Gentlemen, if I did not bless their *beneficent* enmity!

But, Gentlemen, proud as I naturally must be of what I have experienced this day, and exalted as I cannot but feel myself by the contemplation of the magnificent scene which is now before me,—by the view of those countless multitudes, among which every eye is turned upon me with an expression of benignity; yet I do assure you, Gentlemen, and there are those around me who can vouch for the truth of what I say, that I was most anxious—that it was my fixed purpose and determination, to entreat you to spare yourselves the trouble of this day's ceremony. I did not think, that the occasion of returning your representative, on a re-election, called for any peculiar expression of triumph; nor did I think, that a victory over a non-existing, or non-appearing, adversary, justified the same marks of exultation as when able, substantial antagonists had been driven from the field.

But, Gentlemen, my mind was changed, and I yielded to the wishes of my friends, upon information which I have received to-day. The nature of that information I will state to you. I am assured from London, and upon testimony from which it is impossible for me to withhold my belief, that there were among our antagonists some who reckoned upon intimidation as an instrument of success. In the first moments of transport, at the promising commencement of the riots, they communicated this hope to their friends in the metropolis. They fondly flattered themselves that you, Gentlemen, could be scared from my side, and that I should be forced to retire. Intimidation! how little do they know either me or you! After this information, I felt that it would be a false delicacy to abstain from any expressions of exultation, and that our conduct might be liable to misconstruction, if we abridged, by a single formality, the triumph of this day.

Gentlemen, with the election, let the local topics, the local enmities, the local disagreements of the election cease. But cease not with the election the principles upon which your choice has been founded, on whomever, at any time hereafter, your choice may fall, whether on myself, or on a worthier object. For, Gentlemen, I know how little I ought to consider myself as contributing to the glorious result of this contest. Much less important is it to whom, individually,

you commit your representation in Parliament, than that you should fix steadily in your minds the standard by which that representative shall be tried. Let him be a man true to the principles of the constitution, not as understood in the new-fangled doctrines of the day, but as transmitted to us from older times, before the pure current of British freedom had been contaminated by the influx of foreign theories.

Gentlemen, we all know, that, on the former occasion, in 1812, the eyes of England were, in a great measure, fixed upon Liverpool, as the *arena* in which the contest between two sets of political principles was to be decided. But on that occasion, Gentlemen, though you occupied a great space in the public attention, you could not completely monopolize it. There was then a general election. The interest excited, indeed, by the Liverpool contest was pretty widely diffused, but the actual warfare was among ourselves; no stranger had leisure to mingle in our battle. Among other consequences of this state of things, one was, that we were tolerably free from imported calumny; and that, considering the vehemence of the contest, there was, so far as I know, little of personal malignity mixed with it. In the present instance, Liverpool alone has fixed the undistracted attention of both parties, and upon me, in particular, have the full phials of whiggish wrath been discharged.

Standing thus exposed, I have had what some would call the misfortune, but what I must now esteem the singular happiness, of being a mark for the attacks of every political enemy that I have in the world. I do Liverpool the justice to acknowledge, Gentlemen, that the grossest and foulest calumnies are not of native produce, but have been rolled down, in one tide of filth, from the fountain-head of whiggish detraction in London. All the approved practices of the libellers of former periods have been resorted to: my private history ransacked for topics of abuse; every action, every inconsiderate word, of earlier life raked up, and recorded with malignant industry; and invention called in aid where research could find no theme of invective:

“ The lie, so oft o’erthrown,
 “ Th’ imputed trash and nonsense, not my own;”

—all, all has been exhausted: and what is the result? That here I stand.

Gentlemen, amongst other charges, one of fair hostility, but whimsically chosen, considering the quarter from which it comes, is, that of my being about to act in public life with men from whom I have occasionally differed in opinion. Gentlemen, the charge is substantially unfounded. It is unfounded, because, though, on particular questions, I may have differed from many of my

present colleagues, (as what two men may not occasionally differ, if each has an opinion of his own?) yet, upon all the great outlines of our political system, and upon every main principle affecting the foreign policy of England, our opinions have generally concurred. Those opinions I have, to the best of my power, supported, in whatever hands the government of the country has been placed. I have supported them not less strenuously when myself out of office, than when I formed a part of the administration.

Gentlemen, I am really alarmed at the state of pressure in which I see great part of the multitude below. Had I not better take leave of you, and entreat you to disperse?*

Perhaps, Gentlemen, I was the more alive to the danger to which I apprehended you to be exposed, and the more anxious to dismiss you before any accident had happened, from recollecting, that one of the charges most frequently, of late, preferred against me is, my habit of addressing you. And yet, Gentlemen, I am old enough to remember, when the great idol of whiggism himself,† (of whom I mean to speak with all reverence and honour,) in the plenitude of his glory, and in the maturity of his mighty

* Mr. Canning retired for a few moments, until the pressure of the crowd had, in some measure, diminished ; and then, being loudly and repeatedly called for, again came forward.

† The Right Honorable Charles James Fox.

powers, did not disdain to mount various *rostra*, and to descant, not to his constituents only, but to whoever would come to hear him, upon oppression, grievance, tyranny, taxes, and war, and all other matters best calculated to rouse the passions of the populace. Nor are there wanting imitators in our days, who pursue the same course, whenever the people will listen to them.

But, Gentlemen, the self-styled Whigs have a most convenient, though somewhat arbitrary, mode of argument. To them every mode of political warfare is lawful; but to them only: the people are their property; and wo be to the unlicensed intruder who presumes to trespass upon the manor. Or is this the distinction to be taken against me? Am I vilified, not because I address the people, but because I address them on the side of tranquillity and good order? That, instead of seeking out every topic of delusion and inflammation, I am more solicitous to bring before them grounds for contentment, and motives of attachment to their country,—to inculcate their duties as well as their rights, and to hold them firm in their allegiance to the constitutional monarchy of England? Am I arraigned on an inverted construction of the rules of civilized warfare, not because I scatter arrows among the people, but because my arrows are not poisoned?

But, Gentlemen, to recur to the point at which I was interrupted by my alarm for your safety :

By the organ of what party is it that I am accused of inconsistency, for acting with men from whom I may have occasionally differed? Why, Gentlemen, by the organ of a party whose birth and growth, whose essence and element, are coalition; a party which sprung from the coalition between Lord North and Mr. Fox, and which has been revived, within all our memories, by the coalition between Lord Grenville and Lord Grey; a party of which, in spite of all its coalitions, the members are, in reality, so little *coalescent*, that, but last year, on the greatest question which ever the government of this country was called upon to decide and its Parliament to sanction,—on the question of the renewal of the war against Bonaparte,—they were divided half and half: and all that was of most weight or ornament in their party fought the battle of the ministers against the remainder. That remainder, indeed, true to their old creed, would have extended the doctrine of coalition to Bonaparte. But you, Gentlemen, I know, have candour enough to do justice to public men, of whatever party, when they stand up fairly for their country; and you remember, with just acknowledgment, that the manly and consistent eloquence of Lord Grenville, the splendid enthusiasm of Grattan, and the commanding energy of Plunkett, were exerted, on that memorable occasion, in defence of that system of measures, by which, in defiance of the

Whig policy, this country and Europe have been preserved.

Gentlemen, there is yet a heavier charge than either of those which I have stated to you. It is, Gentlemen, that I am an adventurer. To this charge, as I understand it, I am willing to plead guilty. A representative of the people, I am one of the people; and I present myself to those who choose me only with the claims of character, (be they what they may,) unaccredited by patrician patronage or party recommendation. Nor is it in this free country, where, in every walk of life, the road of honourable success is open to every individual,—I am sure it is not in this place, that I shall be expected to apologize for so presenting myself to your choice. I know there is a political creed, which assigns to a certain combination of great families a right to dictate to the sovereign and to influence the people; and that this doctrine of hereditary aptitude for administration is, singularly enough, most prevalent among those who find nothing more laughable than the principle of legitimacy in the Crown.

To this theory I have never subscribed. If to depend directly upon the people, as their representative in Parliament; if, as a servant of the Crown, to lean on no other support than that of public confidence,—if that be to be an adventurer, I plead guilty to the charge, and I would not exchange that situation, to whatever taunts it

may expose me, for all the advantages which might be derived from an ancestry of a hundred generations.

Gentlemen, I will not detain you longer. I have said, that I will not go back to any of the events of the election. Suffice it, that, whatever may be my opinion with respect to the opposition which has been made to your wishes in my favour, I can truly say for myself, that I carry no resentments away with me. Even were I disposed to entertain any such feelings, my heart would not, at this moment, have room for them, so full is it of the sense of your kindnesses, of acknowledgment, and of exultation.

SPEECHES
DURING
THE ELECTION OF 1818.

INTRODUCTION.

RUMOURS of an intended dissolution of Parliament having, early in the year 1818, become general, electioneering movements immediately commenced in Liverpool. The friends of Mr. Canning were the first to take the field: they held a meeting on Thursday, the 23d of April; the object of which was, to take into consideration the propriety of preparing and signing a requisition to him to become again a candidate to represent Liverpool in the new Parliament. Henry Blundell Hollinshead, Esq., was unanimously called to the chair, and opened the business of the day in a brief speech. Mr. Gladstone then read and proposed the requisition, which was seconded by the late Mr. Anthony Littledale, and adopted by the meeting.

The requisition received the signatures of not fewer than 589 most respectable persons, and was forwarded to London the same evening. Mr. Canning's answer to this flattering invitation was received in a few days. He expressed his readiness, whenever the dissolution of Parliament should take place, again to put himself entirely in the hands of his friends. This declaration gave very general satisfaction.

A party, who denominated themselves the friends of Mr. Leyland, were the next to take the field. This gentleman was supposed, by some, to have given, in 1816, a negative consent, at least, to offer himself as a candidate at the next general election; and scarcely any doubt was entertained by the individuals who supported him, at the election in that year, that he would solicit the suffrages of the freemen. To remove any suspicion, however, which might be entertained of his intentions, and to assure themselves of his real sentiments upon the subject, his friends determined to convoke a meeting, for the purpose of preparing and signing a formal requisition to him. Having lain for signature at different places, the requisition was forwarded to

Mr. Leyland, whose reply to it was anxiously looked for by the requisitionists. It was received in a few days; but it was of a very different tenor from what they had fondly expected. He observed, that, “having well weighed all the “consequences to his future life, in the event of a “successful contest, he must, with deference and “respect, beg leave to decline the invitation to “offer himself as a candidate at the approaching “election.”

Although the plans of the party were in some degree disconcerted by the unexpected refusal of Mr. Leyland, their spirit was not of a nature to be easily subdued. They accordingly looked around for some other person qualified to fight their battle; and much time had not elapsed before it was understood that they had fixed their eyes upon a suitable person. Another meeting was, therefore, summoned, and was held on Tuesday, the 2d of June. At this meeting, Charles Lawrence, Esq., was called to the chair; and the Rev. W. Shepherd, after some introductory observations, proposed the Earl of Sefton as a proper person to represent this borough in Parliament. The motion was seconded by the

late Dr. Solomon, and carried by acclamation. A committee was then appointed, and a subscription opened for defraying the legal and other unavoidable expenses of a contested election.

A private, but highly respectable, meeting of the friends of General Gascoyne was also held about the same time, at which it was determined to support his pretensions, with all the interest and exertions of the several gentlemen who were present.

The election commenced on Thursday morning, the 18th of June. John Bolton, Esq., nominated Mr. Canning, who was seconded by the late William Ewart, Esq. General Gascoyne was nominated by John Bridge Aspinall, Esq., seconded by John Wright, Esq. William Earle, Esq., then nominated the Earl of Sefton, who was seconded by Mr. Roger Hunter.

Three candidates having been nominated, a poll was of course demanded. The votes at Lord Sefton's bar were taken, for a short space, by Mr. Earle; but, about ten o'clock, Lord Molyneux, his lordship's son, appeared on the hustings, and personated his father, during the remainder of the contest, in a manner which gained for

him the esteem and approbation of all parties. Throughout the whole of the day, the voting was carried on with the greatest spirit, order, and good humour. The poll closed about five o'clock, when the numbers stood thus: for Mr. Canning, 304; General Gascoyne, 249; Lord Sefton, 164. The comparative numbers on the poll of this day left no doubt of the triumphant issue of the struggle.

The polling was resumed on the following morning, and continued, during the day, with unabated activity and unbroken regularity. On Saturday (the third day) the friends of Lord Sefton had recourse to the novel expedient of opening a second bar for his lordship, by nominating Arthur Heywood, Esq. The reason of this proceeding was obvious. The voters for Lord Sefton had, from the opening of the poll, been rapidly decreasing in number. His friends, therefore, with a view to diminish his minority, and to poll the freemen for his lordship with greater rapidity, adopted the plan of opening a second bar for him, in the name of Mr. Heywood. But they soon lost whatever benefit they expected from this manœuvre. The friends of Mr. Canning,

to counterbalance any apparent advantage which their antagonist might derive from it, also resolved to nominate John Bolton, Esq.; and a bar was immediately opened in the name of that highly-respected gentleman.

The delay occasioned by these extraordinary proceedings greatly retarded the poll on Saturday. But the still more extraordinary proceedings of Monday threw them into comparative insignificance. Colonel Williams appeared on the hustings, and was put in nomination on the part of Lord Sefton. Some opposition was made to the colonel's nomination; it was, however, after considerable discussion, carried into effect. The gallant colonel, after reading his reasons for the proceeding, insisted, that the oaths against bribery and corruption and the long oath should be administered, indiscriminately, to all the free-men who came to poll. This was agreed to. The nomination of Colonel Williams, on the part of Lord Sefton, was followed by the nomination of John Bridge Aspinall, Esq., on the part of General Gascoyne. Three real candidates and four nominal ones were now on the hustings. The real and nominal candidates were

afterwards augmented to the number of nine, for whom the like number of bars were opened, and a round of tallies was actually polled at each of the nine bars. The confusion occasioned by the multiplicity of candidates now became inconvenient, and even ludicrous: but “confusion was soon worse confounded” by the nomination of an additional number of nominal candidates, who now amounted to eighteen, and, with three real candidates, made, in the whole, *twenty-one!* a number unprecedented in the annals of contested elections. The hustings became a scene of the greatest confusion; and the polling was again much retarded by the extraordinary proceedings of the day. The inconvenience produced by the anomaly indicated the proper remedy. The nominal candidates abdicated, by mutual consent, their separate claims, and the twenty-one bars were reduced to four. The exception was in favour of Mr. Heywood’s bar, which was allowed to be kept open from a principle of accommodation. As a matter of curiosity, we subjoin a correct list of the nominal candidates.

FOR MR. CANNING.

JOHN BOLTON,
SIR WILLIAM BARTON,
RALPH BENSON,

WILLIAM EWART,
ANTHONY LITLEDALE,
JOHN TOBIN.

FOR GENERAL GASCOYNE.

JOHN B. ASPINALL,
JOHN SHAW,

JOHN WRIGHT,
JOHN CLARKE.

FOR LORD SEFTON.

ARTHUR HEYWOOD,
GEORGE WILLIAMS,
NICHOLAS ASHTON,
THOMAS BOOTH,

CHARLES LAWRENCE,
WILLIAM EARLE,
THOMAS EARLE,
HENRY BROUGHAM.

On the opening of the hustings the following morning, several gentlemen stated their opinion, that the act of Parliament never contemplated the proceedings of an election prospectively: that it was unnecessary to put the oaths to every individual as he came to vote; and that it was only when some specific exception was taken to a particular individual, that it became the duty of the returning officers to subject the voter to the necessity of taking the oaths. It was, therefore, determined to withdraw the oaths, and to permit the polling to proceed without being impeded by such unnecessary shackles. It accordingly went on, without further interruption, until its final close.

On Wednesday symptoms of weakness began to manifest themselves on the part of Lord Sefton. His tallies were with difficulty supplied during the afternoon; and a speedy termination of the contest was confidently expected by the friends of the other candidates. The symptoms which had made their appearance on the preceding day assumed a more formidable aspect on Thursday, and the crisis of the contest rapidly approached. Accordingly, about twelve o'clock, after having polled a few tallies,

Mr. EARLE addressed the returning officers, stating, in the name of the friends of Lord Sefton and Mr. Heywood, their wish that the contest should terminate. He confessed, that they had been fairly and honourably beaten. But if, after this intimation, the other candidates should continue the poll, for the purpose of increasing their majorities, the friends of Lord Sefton, he added, were determined to receive votes, and to protect, to the utmost of their power, the right of any zealous freemen who might be inclined to record their names on his lordship's poll.

THE MAYOR (Thomas Case, Esq.) expressed his approbation of the very honourable and candid

manner in which Mr. Earle had declared the wish of the friends of Lord Sefton that the contest should immediately cease; and earnestly recommended to the friends of the other candidates to accept the proposal, that the poll might be forthwith closed, and that the parties who were actively engaged in the election might return to their accustomed avocations.

Mr. HOLLINSHEAD remarked, that a number of freemen were then waiting at Mr. Canning's bar, all anxious to record their names on the poll-book, besides a very great number who could be brought forward in a very short time.

Mr. BOLTON, after consulting a few moments with the other members of Mr. Canning's committee, declared their acceptance of the proposal made by Mr. Earle.

LORD MOLYNEUX then took leave, in a very feeling and affecting manner, of the returning officers and the gentlemen on the hustings. He thanked his friends for the zeal which they had manifested in his father's cause, and for their unparalleled exertions to return him one of the representatives for this populous town. Although this zeal and these exertions had failed to

procure them success, yet there was nothing disheartening in their failure. They had done every thing but triumph. He then took leave of Mr. Canning and General Gascoyne; thanking them for their courtesies towards him, and for the harmony and good-humour which had subsisted between them throughout the struggle.

Mr. CANNING observed, that, when the proposal was made by the friends of Lord Sefton, for immediately closing the poll, he did not think himself at liberty to give any opinion upon the subject, considering himself entirely in the hands of his friends. But, those friends having accepted the proposal, he must express his unqualified approbation of the propriety of the proceeding. He could not conclude without adding his testimony to that of the young nobleman who had just addressed them, to the fairness, the candour, and the liberality which had marked the conduct of all parties throughout the contest. The conduct of that young nobleman himself had been such as to excite a feeling of respect and approbation even in the minds of those who were opposed to him. And, although success had not crowned Lord Sefton's cause, of

this he was perfectly satisfied, that that cause could not have been confided to hands better calculated to gain for it favour and success than to the hands of his son.

General GASCOYNE completely concurred in every thing that had been said by his right honourable friend. Like him, he considered himself, during the discussion, entirely in the hands of his friends. Those friends, he was sure, would do what had been so strongly recommended to them by the chief magistrate, and would terminate the election in the same spirit in which it had been conducted. He must do the noble lord and his friends the justice to say, that their conduct, during the contest, had been marked by the utmost fairness and liberality. They had opposed his return strenuously and determinedly; but, even in the ardour of conflict, they had maintained towards him the character of gentlemen. He was convinced, that the opposition which had been directed against him was directed, not against his person, but against his public principles.

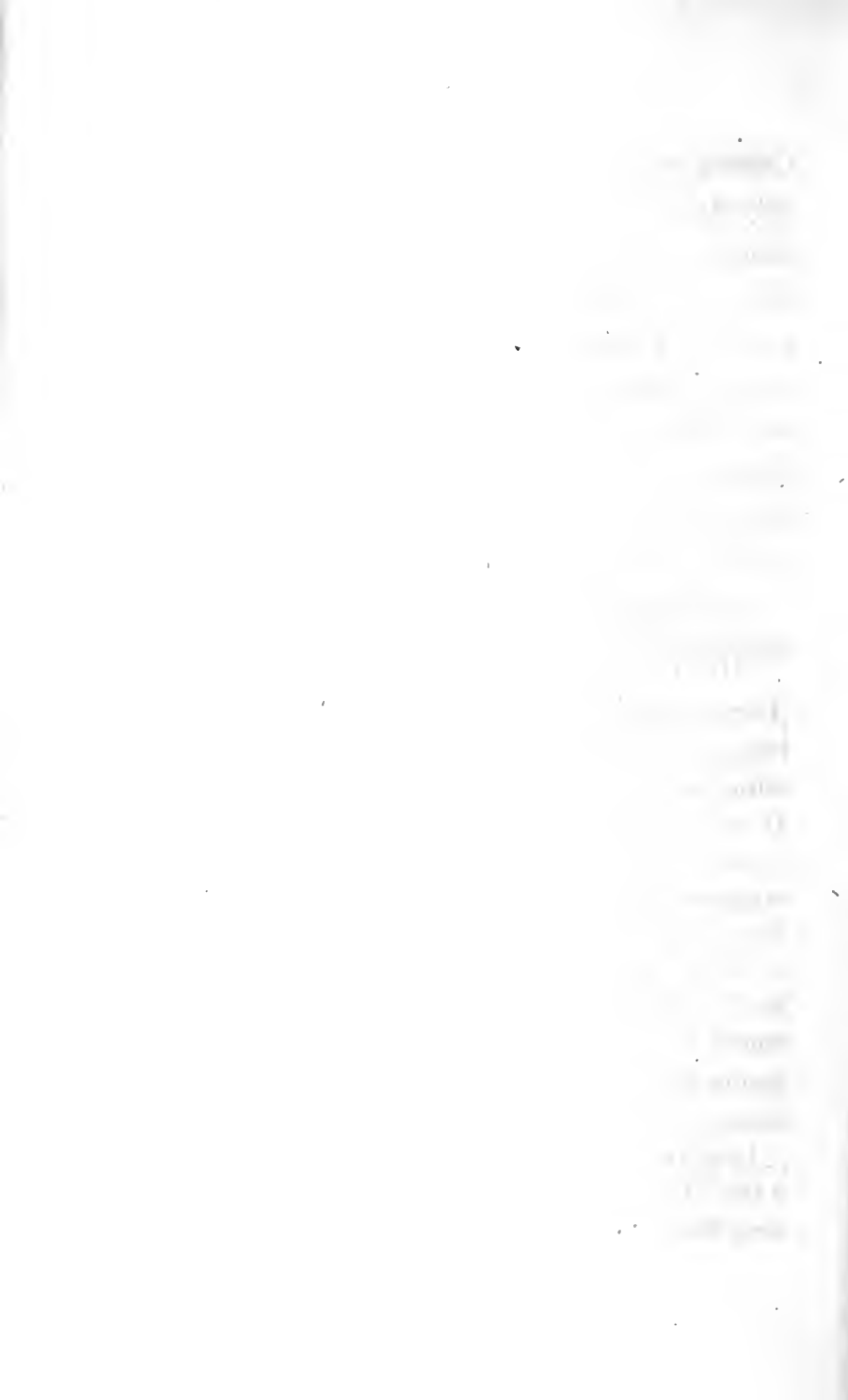
The Town-clerk then read the usual proclamation; and the Right Honourable George

Canning and General Gascoyne were declared duly elected. At the conclusion of the poll the numbers were:—For Mr. Canning, 1,654: General Gascoyne, 1,444: Lord Sefton, 1,280. The total number of freemen polled was 2,876. The number polled at the memorable election of 1812 was 2,726; a greater number than ever polled before: so that the number polled, at this election, exceeded, by 150, the number of freemen polled at any preceding one.

The following table will show the progressive state of the poll during each day of the election:

	1st Day.	2d Day.	3d Day.	4th Day.	5th Day.	6th Day.	7th Day.
CANNING	304	623	882	1007	1290	1571	1654
GASCOYNE	249	527	762	869	1120	1370	1444
SEFTON	164	352	582	685	979	1244	1280

On Monday, the 29th June, the friends of Mr. Canning met at the Music-hall, in Bold-street, to celebrate his third return to Parliament as representative for Liverpool, Henry Blundell Hollinshead, Esq., in the chair. The company consisted of nearly three hundred gentlemen of the highest respectability in the town.



SPEECH

ON HIS ARRIVAL IN LIVERPOOL, ON WEDNESDAY, THE
17TH OF JUNE, 1818.

GENTLEMEN,

THEY deem very lightly of the situation of a member of Parliament, who think that it is one either to be solicited or to be granted as a favour. It is an important trust which the constituents confide; it is an arduous duty which the representative undertakes to discharge. And wisely has our constitution ordained, that periods shall arrive at which the receiver of that delegated trust shall return it into the hands of those from whom he received it, not to resume it again, unless by their unchanged and unabated confidence.

Gentlemen, there may be those to whom such a day of account is fearful. As to myself, I confess, that, if I were to compare even the day on

which I was first honoured with your suffrages, or the day on which you renewed them to me two years ago, with the present day, I should say, that even with all the perils (be they what they may) of the menaced contest before me, your reception of me has made this day, comparatively, the happiest and the proudest of the three.

Gentlemen, in confiding to your representative this awful trust, you impose upon him a twofold duty. The one, to act in his place in Parliament according to the best of his own honest judgment for the general good of the whole kingdom. The other, to watch with diligence and fidelity over the interest of his particular constituents.

Gentlemen, if, in the latter point, I have, in any instance, failed, let the man whose just and honest interests have been neglected by me come forward and charge me to my face. I make the challenge, because I know that I can meet it. And, in making this challenge, Gentlemen, I make it not only as an amicable call upon those who are my friends, but as a call of defiance even upon those who have been my antagonists. If, since I have been honoured with the name of your representative, I have suffered, in any one matter of individual concern, the recollection of local politics to warp the straight line of duty, I have not performed that duty well. But I know (and therefore it is that I desire to be corrected,

if I am stating this proposition untruly) that there is not one, even among those who would have impeded the completion of your choice, who has not, when he has wanted my services, according to his fair occasions, profited by them.

But, Gentlemen, while I have faithfully discharged this last part of my duty, and, in this sense of impartiality, while I have considered myself, though returned by the suffrages of the majority, yet placed in the House of Commons as the representative of the whole, although I have never suffered a question as to any man's vote at the election to deprive him of any assistance which I could properly render him, whether in the way of his individual business, or in co-operation for the interests of your town; in the discharge of the other branch of my duty I have acted on other grounds. I have acted, indeed, on those subjects in consonance to the wishes of the great majority among you who elected me, because the opinions which I held on questions of constitutional policy are the opinions which first recommended me to your notice: and those opinions I hold still unchanged; and have never qualified or compromised them by any infusion of the political opinions of your opponents.

Gentlemen, in explaining, thus shortly, what has been the tenor of my past conduct, I entreat you to collect from that explanation, rather than from any promises or professions, the course

which I am likely to pursue in future. To particular interests, to local interests, I shall give a constant attention. But it is in conformity to the constitutional principles which procured my first return to Parliament as your representative that I shall hereafter, as heretofore, govern my political conduct.

Gentlemen, we live in awful times, and when principles are abroad, the indulgence of which, the fostering of which, the countenancing of which, the not resisting which strenuously and determinedly, would hazard the existence of the happy establishment under which we live. With these principles I have never held communion, and will never compromise. And if, by the declarations and the stand which I have made against those principles, I have excited the fear and incurred the hatred of those by whom they are professed and propagated, I find my consolation and compensation in the additional hold which, you allow me to believe, I have obtained upon your affections.

Mr. Canning declined entering into the state of local parties, or into the prospects of the election. He concluded by merely stating, that the poll would open at eight o'clock in the morning, and that the earlier his friends took the field, the sooner the contest would be over.

SPEECH

AT THE CLOSE OF THE FIRST DAY'S POLL, THE 18TH OF
JUNE, 1818.

GENTLEMEN,

To begin with matter of fact: the poll to-day has exceeded my most sanguine expectations, By your favour I have obtained a majority, amounting, in the whole, to 304; a greater number of freemen than ever polled on a first day for any one candidate. The next in succession is General Gascoyne; his numbers are 249. The last, the Earl of Sefton, whose numbers are 164. To this last number that with which I have been honoured is nearly in the proportion of two to one.

Gentlemen, after this statement, I may be allowed to say, that the contest has begun auspiciously. It is not absolutely nothing, that we are favoured as we are by the beauty of this day, which enables the immense multitude which I see around me to be assembled without inconvenience, and that we bear in recollection what day this is—the anniversary of the greatest

victory that ever crowned the British arms.* Gentlemen, all these auspicious circumstances, undoubtedly, are not peculiar to ourselves: the same sun which brightens the scene before me shines with impartial light upon our opponents. But there are points upon which those who hold the political opinions which we concur in holding have feelings more peculiarly their own; because we know, to our sorrow, and, as Britons, to our shame, that there are breasts (let me not be supposed to indicate any persons among yourselves) in which the recollection of the day, of which this is the third anniversary, excites no such triumphant sensations as it excites in your breasts and in mine;—there are those to whom the recollection of that mighty victory, in which the right arm of Great Britain struck down the most stupendous tyranny that ever bestrode the world, affords matter rather of regret and lamentation than of unqualified exultation and national pride.

But, Gentlemen, peace has its triumphs as well as war. If the memory of that battle, which rescued Europe, and, in rescuing Europe, saved this country from the common lot with which, sooner or later, it might otherwise have been overwhelmed, is to be cherished in our hearts with everlasting and grateful remembrance, it is not merely because it exalted to the highest pitch

* The Battle of Waterloo, fought on the 18th of June, 1815.

the military character of this country;—it is not merely because it may be supposed to have shielded us from the evils of a renewed and long-protracted conflict;—not because it preserved our shores from invasion—(for when could these happy shores have seriously to dread being trampled by the foot of the invader?)—not merely that it maintained to Great Britain the rank which she had always vindicated to herself among the nations of the world:—but because, through all these means, it contributed to the maintenance of that constitution from which all our blessings and all our strength, all our power to achieve and all our right to enjoy, are derived: and that constitution, we have but too much reason to be aware, has, even when the dangers of external attack are past, internal enemies to combat.

The triumphs of peace, therefore, are wanting to give full vigour and maturity to the best fruits of the achievements of war. And, amongst those triumphs, I know none more splendid, more imposing, more effectual than the peaceful triumph of a popular election, conducted on principles such as yours; principles which are directed not to the extravagant exaltation of the democratical part of the constitution at the expense of the other branches of it, but to the due support of the whole of that beautiful and complex frame, of which popular election is, indeed, the animating and conservative spirit.

Gentlemen, I should be glad to know, among those who entertain the wildest notions of the elective suffrage, whether they might not be contented, theoretically at least, with the proceedings of this day. If I am asked, whether I will consent to extend indefinitely that right of suffrage which I have this day witnessed the exercise, I answer—No. And, first, for this plain reason—I will not consent to disfranchise my constituents. You enjoy and have a right to your franchises: and franchises and privileges are terms which imply a principle of limitation. Besides, unlimited extension of the right of suffrage would dissipate and exhaust its virtue: as the circle that spreads from the stone cast into the water extends itself till it embraces the whole surface of the pool, and is lost in its own diffusion.

Gentlemen, at this period of an election which may yet have many days to run, it is my desire to avoid any topics which could be construed as countenancing, much less giving rise to, local differences. And, among the circumstances which enhance the triumph of this day, is this,—that no day, since I have been acquainted with Liverpool, has at once contributed so much to the favourable result of an election, and disturbed so little the peace and good-humour of the community.

Gentlemen, it is the business of all who are concerned in this struggle to take care, so far as

depends upon themselves, that this temper shall be preserved. But, if I may be permitted to make any distinction, I should say, that it is more peculiarly the business of my friends. With all the certainty and the growing manifestation of ultimate success, give me leave to tell you, you cannot afford to incur the suspicion of ill-humour. Give, I beseech you, to the rest of England, agitated, at this moment, by popular contests, (as, in the nature of things, it ought to be, at the period of a general election,) an example, in Liverpool, how such contests should be conducted.

Mr. Canning concluded by saying, that, if the success of that day were followed up in the like proportion for the two following days, the result of the contest would be in effect, if not altogether, decided; and took leave in the hope, that those who had not favoured him with their company at the hustings on that day, would be at his bar early on the morrow.

SPEECH

AT THE CLOSE OF THE SECOND DAY'S POLL, THE 19TH OF
JUNE, 1818.

GENTLEMEN,

THIS day has been as auspicious to our cause as yesterday in every respect but one—that which I mentioned as telling equally upon our antagonists as upon ourselves—I mean the fine weather, on which I yesterday congratulated you. But you will derive some advantage even from this deterioration in our circumstances: for I shall, therefore, feel it a duty to detain you the less while; knowing how many of you must have been exposed to the whole inclemency of the day, and must be desirous of repairing to your homes.

Gentlemen, the state of the poll this day is as follows: your continued exertions have raised me to a number, of which, I believe, there is no instance on a second day's poll in Liverpool, 623. General Gascoyne has obtained 527: Lord Sefton, 352. But what shows still more strongly the exertions which the freemen have made this day towards bringing the contest to a close, is, that no smaller a number than 980 freemen have

already polled ; a rate which, if every freeman of the town were supposed to be within the reach of the hustings, would, in four days more, exhaust the list of individuals who have the right of voting. Comparing this with the rate of any former election, I have to congratulate the freemen of the town on the unprecedented alacrity with which their exertions have been brought forward. I congratulate them still more on the continuance of the peace and good-humour of the town, during a struggle of such arduous and animating competition.

Gentlemen, I understand that some attempts have been made to-day to detract from the value of the majority which you have obtained for me, by attributing it to an understanding—to what is called a coalition—between myself—or, rather, between those who do me the honour to give me their support, and the supporters of the candidate who stands next to me. Gentlemen, without fear of being misapprehended, I say, that I have the highest respect for General Gascoyne, and that I shall be well pleased if I should have him again for my colleague. We have worked together for six years, and, I hope, not to your disadvantage. But I state this merely as my own individual opinion ; I state it, because the frankness with which I make that declaration entitles me the more to implicit belief, when I follow it up with an assertion, that, upon my

honour, so far as I am informed and believe, there is no such understanding as has been imputed.

Gentlemen, the friends who originally recommended me to your notice, and whose recommendation has conciliated to me your powerful support,—these friends, I say, are *not* the party in Liverpool who ever presumed to think they could impose two members upon this town. They are *not* the party to dictate to the freemen, that their votes should be given to two or none. No such pretension is entertained on the part of my friends: it would be idle and superfluous to add, that there can be no such presumption on my part.

It is for you, Gentlemen, by your unbiassed suffrages, to ascertain who shall be your representatives; and to place them on the record of those suffrages according to the order in which you may think they deserve to stand. Of this, Gentlemen, you may be assured, that, whatever individual the suffrages of the freemen of Liverpool shall be pleased to associate with me in the important trust which they are about to delegate to their representatives—with that man, even if I should differ from him in general politics, I will co-operate for the benefit of the town; and he shall have, on all local questions, if he wishes it, the advantage (whatever that may be) of my cordial assistance and of my disinterested advice.

Gentlemen, I hope that, by the few words which I have addressed to you, I have disposed of the question of coalition;—and that you will believe, that as, on the one hand, neither those who recommended me, nor you who have adopted me, are entitled or desirous to prescribe or fetter the choice of your brother freemen; so, on the other hand, I look to your suffrages for myself alone;—not presuming to exercise a discretion or to express a wish as to the mode in which you shall dispose of the vote which remains, after you have placed me where the representative of your choice ought to be.

Gentlemen, another day, such as this, will go far to accomplish that object. For the present, I have before me occupation for the evening, which, added to the fatigues of the morning, will, I am sure, prevail with you to allow me to retire: and you, Gentlemen, I know, will be employed, during the remainder of the evening, much better than in listening to me,—in pursuing that course which you have hitherto so successfully pursued, to bring to full maturity exertions of such unexampled promise.

SPEECH

AT THE CLOSE OF THE THIRD DAY'S POLL, THE 20TH OF
JUNE, 1818.

GENTLEMEN,

THE circumstances and the progress of the poll this day are, in some respects, but not materially, different from what I ventured to anticipate yesterday. Our fine weather has returned to us, and our good-humour has not yet abandoned us. I trust, therefore, on the whole, that the election will be conducted under the same auspices, and, on our side, (I would hope on all sides,) in the same spirit in which it has begun.

The numbers of the day are ; for myself, who continue to stand, by your exertions, highest, 882 ; for General Gascoyne, 762 ; for Lord Sefton, 582 ; giving to me, by your favour, over the antagonist whose success could alone bring mine in question, a majority of 300 votes ; an increase of near 30 upon the positive majority which I enjoyed yesterday. It may be material to add, that no less than between 14 and 1,500 freemen have polled ; justifying the calculation, that three

days, at the same rate, must not only be decisive of the election, (which, indeed, I trust, will be decided sooner,) but would exhaust, to the last man, all the registered and producible votes of this borough.

Gentlemen, I mentioned to you yesterday the insinuations respecting a coalition. I avowed to you, that I wished well to General Gascoyne; but I told you, at the same time, what is correctly true, that no coalition of interest had taken place, and even no understanding between his friends and mine. But, Gentlemen, in giving this negative to an assertion which is untrue, I beg not to be understood as implying, that, if that assertion had been well-founded,—if, holding the same public principles, General Gascoyne's friends and mine had determined to follow the same course,—there would have been any thing to be ashamed of in such a concurrence and co-operation. I denied the assertion, because it was not founded in fact; and because I suspected it to be made for the sake of drawing from it an inference, not unfavourable to my politics or to General Gascoyne's, but disparaging to you and insulting to the independence of the freemen.

What I then suspected is now more obvious. The imputation of a coalition was evidently contrived, first, with a retrospective policy, to justify that memorable coalition of 1812, which you then called me in to defeat, and which, in your

hands, I was the instrument of defeating; and, at the same time, to justify, prospectively, if the state of the poll should require it, a coalition of another sort—the bringing forward an empty bar to *split* votes (as the election phrase is) for the Earl of Sefton.

Gentlemen, it was to lay the ground for this measure that the cry of coalition was raised; and, though the denial which was given to that cry was such as, in my conscience, I believe, must have convinced those who were most busy in propagating it, that it was wholly without foundation; yet, having, by persevering assertion, attempted to convince others, if not themselves, of the truth of it, a pretence has been deduced from it this morning for opening another bar for your antagonists, for the purpose of magnifying their poll. I do not complain of this as an unfair stroke of policy. They have a right to take their own course. But the right which they exercise themselves they cannot complain of seeing, in turn, exercised by others. In compensation, therefore, for the untenanted bar of Mr. Heywood, your worthy fellow-townsmen, my respected host, has had the goodness to allow his honourable name to be used, for the purpose of advancing my poll in a like proportion. He is contented to be, for this purpose and in this sense, the *shadow* of a candidate: well deserving, as you know him to be, if he were alive to such ambition, of the

substantial suffrages of those fellow-townsmen whose esteem and affection he enjoys.

Gentlemen, in elections, trick must be met by trick, and management by management. We, Gentlemen,—my friends as well as myself,—were ready to go on quietly in our own path, separate and unconnected, leaving to the freemen of Liverpool to decide between the three candidates for their favour. But, when a fourth name is started, for no purpose but that of an apparent and fallacious multiplication and subdivision of votes ;—(as if it were imagined, that a vote is like a polypus, which, cut in two, shoots out a head or a tail, and so doubles itself on each division ;) —we have thought ourselves at liberty to adopt the same ingenious experiment. And, if success be a legitimate test of an experiment, we have, certainly, no reason to be dissatisfied with the suggestion which we have thus borrowed from our opponents.

Gentlemen, the effect of this device, though it has been, in one sense, to retard our progress, will, in another, perhaps accelerate the conclusion of the contest. It has retarded us, because it has given to our antagonists to-day an appearance of strength, which they do not, in reality, possess: just as an appearance of wealth would be assumed by any person who should expend the income of two years in one. If, by *splitting* their votes, they could, indeed, have made two

out of one, undoubtedly they would have gained a real and permanent advantage; but, having, in fact, polled two votes, instead of one, in each round in which Mr. Heywood's bar has been made auxiliary to Lord Sefton's, it is evident, that the tendency of such an increased expenditure must be to shorten the duration of the contest. They cannot "spend and have;" and the votes, thus lavishly anticipated to-day, may, perhaps, be missed on Monday.

Gentlemen, you know better than I do, that we have forces enough in store to meet this and any other mode of division or multiplication. I will not, therefore, detain you longer than while I request you to persevere with the same industry which you have so beneficially exerted hitherto, in collecting, for the day of final success, all that remains to be brought forward of the effective strength and affectionate zeal of your several neighbourhoods.

SPEECH

AT THE CLOSE OF THE FOURTH DAY'S POLL, THE 22D OF
JUNE, 1818.

GENTLEMEN,

IF I have been longer than usual this evening in reaching the place from which I am to address you, you are to attribute it to the accident of my being, according to an arrangement agreed to by all the candidates, the last to leave the hustings this day. And, under these circumstances, you will be rather surprised that I am not later still, when I tell you, that the number of candidates for the honour of representing you in Parliament has been, in the course of this day, not less than *twenty-one!*

Gentlemen, you have all read, no doubt, the letters of Lord Chesterfield. It is upon the authority of that polite writer, I think, that it has been laid down as a maxim, that, for the perfect enjoyment of social comfort, a company ought not to be less numerous than the Graces, nor more numerous than the Muses. Gentlemen, your candidates, when we set out, were equal in

number to the Graces only; and, so long as that analogy was preserved, we went on most courteously together. On Saturday that analogy was abandoned by the addition of two candidates. Disorder immediately ensued: but we had no sooner reached the hustings this morning, than an attempt was made to repair it by raising our number to nine. Bars were actually opened for candidates equal in number to the Muses; but not, that I could see, with any increase of harmony from that association.

Gentlemen, having tried that mystical number for one round, (just time enough to induce Lord Sefton's friends to inscribe "HARMONY AND SEFTON" on their flag,) it was found, that the Muses were any thing but a security for harmony. The harmony which followed the adoption of their number was, indeed, of that species for which certain concerts (called, I know not how justly, after our neighbours the Dutch) are celebrated, where every man is said to play his own tune upon his own instrument!

Unluckily, the effort to escape from this confusion was not as well considered as it was, no doubt, well intended. By adding to the number nine, nine more, and three more to that, till, by regular progression, we rose to the number that I have stated, twenty-one,—I cannot help thinking, that we rather augmented than diminished the complication of our affairs.

The list, however, of twenty-one, which I hold in my hand, but which the excessive state of pressure in which I see you prevents me from reading to you, contains many names of individuals which you would hear with kindness and respect.—[Cries of “ Read, read !”] But, then, Gentlemen, there are others of a different description.—[Cries of “ Read, read !”] No, Gentlemen. The concert which I have described is, happily, terminated ; and, as many of the performers were advertised without their own consent, and were never persuaded to take a vocal part in it, I should do unfairly in bringing their names before you for criticism and comparison.

But, Gentlemen, I say, seriously and sincerely, it was a great satisfaction to me to find, that, in case of real necessity, there were so many men in this town, of the principles which you approve, who could have been brought forward to put down any combination against your interests and freedom. Among these names, as I told you on Saturday, my respected host (who now stands near me) was one ; and, as I then announced to you this fact, and the motive of his allowing himself to be put in nomination, I owe it to him to say, that, that motive having ceased, he has lost no time in relinquishing his short trial of public life ; and, giving up all claim to your suffrages, has gladly withdrawn again into that privacy which he loves and which, you all know, he adorns.

Gentlemen, I was for some time at a loss to conceive what could possibly have put it into the head of that venerable magistrate, Colonel Williams, (for he it was who started this extraordinary arithmetical progression to-day, by presenting himself as an additional candidate;)—I was at a loss, I say, to conceive, what could have suggested it to his imagination, that, amongst all the things that were wanting in this contest, and on his own side, candidates were the materials in which they were most deficient! From all I had before heard, I had reason to suppose, that of candidates they had enough, and that voters were principally wanting. But, it seems, it was reserved for this sagacious politician not only to discover where the want really pinched, but who was the fittest person to supply it. My difficulty, however, was, in a great measure, solved, when I recollected the worthy colonel's passion for parliamentary reform. The fashions of London travel down to the country, and are sometimes mistaken and disfigured in rural imitation. I am persuaded, that, something in this way, Colonel Williams, having learned, from Major Cartwright, that *universal suffrage* was the one thing necessary in politics, has only made a small mistake in the application of that doctrine, and has conceived the major to intend, not that every man should vote, but that every man should be a candidate! Under such a conception, (however

misapprehended,) nothing could be more praiseworthy than Colonel Williams's tender of his services. Of this plan of reform it may, at least, be said, that, as it is the newest, so it is the most simple and most innocent that Colonel Williams could possibly pursue.

The expedient, however, having been tried, we have all, by common consent, grown weary of it; and, after having indulged a little of that ill-humour which will break out in the best regulated controversies, we have found, happily not too late, that we had better return towards the point from which we set out. We have so returned; not, indeed, precisely to the original number of the Graces, but to that number with the ornamental addition only of Mr. Heywood, as a sort of master of ceremonies. You have now again three real candidates offering themselves to your choice; and Mr. Heywood is so good as to stand by to see fair play.

Under these circumstances, you will not be surprised that our progress to-day has been considerably retarded. In point of fact, the number of freemen polled this morning does not amount to one-half of that polled on any preceding day. It is not above 230. But this diminution of total numbers has not diminished the majority which, by your favour, I already enjoyed. Lord Sef-ton's numbers are 685: mine, 1,007; (increasing

the majority of Saturday by 22 :) General Gascoyne stands between us with 869. We still deny, and truly, the existence of a coalition; but Lord Sefton and Mr. Heywood are professedly united: two and two are a fairer match than two and one would have been; and it is for you, not for me, to draw the inference which you may think right from this conjunction.

SPEECH

AT THE CLOSE OF THE FIFTH DAY'S POLL, THE 23D OF
JUNE, 1818.

GENTLEMEN,

Two thousand two hundred and forty freemen have now polled. Of these, 1,290 have honoured me with their suffrages. The majority with which I stand over Lord Sefton is as 1,290 to 979; a majority of 311.

Gentlemen, undoubtedly this is a most satisfactory, and, with a view to the conclusion of the

contest, a most decisive majority. But, in the spirit of truth in which I have always addressed you, I must not omit to call your observation to the circumstance, that, upon the poll of this day, there is a diminution of my majority by 11. This is no very considerable loss, indeed; it is one which we can afford, and it is one which we can repair; but it is fit that it should be distinctly stated.

Gentlemen, I have been considering with myself to what cause this small, partial, and temporary retrogradation is to be ascribed. Not, certainly, to any want of zeal on the part of my friends; because this day has brought to the poll a greater number of voters than ever attended at any poll in Liverpool. But, I think, Gentlemen, I have discovered the cause in myself,—and in my own misconduct. From the moment of my arrival among you, I have been guilty of a great omission. It too often happens, that those who have received great benefits are, so long as they continue in the uninterrupted enjoyment of them, unmindful of the hands from which they were received. I state this infirmity of our nature, not as a sufficient apology, but as the best that I can offer, for having, during the course of this election, omitted to ascribe due influence to the female part of your community.

Gentlemen, I am this day punished, and justly, for that omission; but, like our majority, I

trust it may yet be retrieved. You will be my witnesses, that, on former occasions, I was not remiss in tracing to its true source the unexampled success which attended my first election. You who know how much I owed to the good wishes of the female part of the inhabitants of Liverpool, know also how gratefully and gladly I acknowledged the obligation: and, if I have hitherto neglected to renew those acknowledgments, the minority on the poll of this day, small as it is, would be a sufficient hint to remind me of my fault; and the glory of this day, in the exhibition of beauty which it has brought forth to witness my return home, would be a sufficient inducement to me to make haste to confess and to repair it.

But, Gentlemen, however remiss I have been here, I have not been forgetful, elsewhere, of the claims of the female world to due participation in matters of election. Of the plans of parliamentary reform on which, in my place in Parliament, I have had occasion to comment, I have commented on none with more indignation and rebuke than on that which, admitting the whole male population to a vote, presumptuously excluded women from a right of suffrage, falsely denominated universal. I do not mean to say, for I will not flatter even the fair part of my auditors, at the expense of truth, (at least before so large an assembly as this;)—I do not mean to

say, that even the association of the softer sex in the new system of elective franchise would entirely reconcile me to an extension of it which, I think, would be full of mischief. But there is one pledge which I am quite ready to give, and which, I trust, they will think satisfactory,—that I never will consent to any plan of universal suffrage in which *they* are *not* included.

Gentlemen, having now frankly confessed my crime, and offered the best atonement in my power, I will not profane the day by mixing any other topic in my address to you; nor by addressing to you, Gentlemen, the least worthy half of my auditory, any thing in which the female part of it are not immediately concerned. I will not even exhort you to persevere in your exertions in my favour, without adding, that, though the day is not yet arrived on which ladies are allowed to come forward in their own persons to the bar, you are, nevertheless, to take them into your councils, and to rely upon their advice and upon their influence in the conduct and for the success of the election.

SPEECH

AT THE CLOSE OF THE SIXTH DAY'S POLL, THE 24TH OF
JUNE, 1818.

GENTLEMEN,

MY confession of yesterday has redeemed my fault; the atonement which I offered has been accepted; and I have now the satisfaction of informing you, that my majority has recovered from the small abatement which it suffered yesterday, and is re-established on a footing which is not likely again to be changed, and on which I shall be perfectly contented that it should rest, unaugmented, until the final close of the poll.

Gentlemen, the number at which I stand to-day is 1,571; a majority over Lord Sefton of 327. General Gascoyne is between us: his number is 1,370; giving to us, Gentlemen, (if that were material,) a majority of 200 over him; and himself retaining a majority of about 131 over Lord Sefton.

This is the comparative state of the poll. The total number of freemen who have polled is no less than 2,761; being, by 35, a greater number

than ever before polled at any election in Liverpool. According to all reasonable calculation, therefore, the battle must soon expire for want of combatants. But, however this may be, you will be glad to hear, Gentlemen, that, even should our antagonists find the means of maintaining, for another day, the same close conflict which they have maintained throughout this morning, I am enabled confidently to assure you, and I do myself entirely believe, that after polling with them man for man, to the exhaustion of the last vote that it is possible they should bring into the field, I should still have a chosen reserve of more than 300, who would come forward, not to decide the poll, but to swell the magnitude of our victory.

Under these circumstances, Gentlemen, it is not improbable, that to-morrow may be the day of final struggle; for, so far as I have had any opportunity of observing the proceedings of our opponents within the last two days, there is no disposition, on their part, to a vexatious protraction of the contest. I owe it to them in justice to say, that I have seen nothing in their conduct,—that nothing has otherwise come to my knowledge, which would authorize me to suspect, much less to impute to them, any intention of keeping the town in that state of ferment and disquietude which is inseparable from such a struggle, after their hope of success shall have

been really abandoned. I owe it farther in justice to them to say, that, from the effect, probably, of their example, as, I hope, of ours, my experience of elections in Liverpool cannot find a parallel to this for the peaceableness and good-humour with which it has been conducted on the hustings, and which, so far as I know, have generally prevailed throughout the town.

As to ourselves, indeed, I took the liberty of stating to you, at an early period of the election, that it was peculiarly our duty to abstain from all inflammatory topics, from all incitements to irritation: for, if defeat affords no excuse for the indulgence of such a temper, and can derive no consolation from it, it is no less true, that the display of any intemperate spirit detracts much from the grace and from the credit of success.

I trust, Gentlemen, that the contest will be continued to the end in the same manner: and, looking forward to another opportunity of addressing you more at large on topics from which I have purposely abstained during the contest, I will not longer withhold you from your avocations of the evening. I take the liberty only to exhort you to unrelaxed activity in finishing the little that remains to be achieved towards our complete and final triumph; exhorting you, at the same time, to make, as heretofore, your wives and daughters sharers in all your councils.

SPEECH

AFTER HAVING BEEN CHAIRED, THE 26TH OF JUNE, 1818.

GENTLEMEN,

FOR the third time you have been pleased to raise me to the envied situation of representative for Liverpool; and this time by a more general concurrence than on any former occasion, and by a majority more commanding in effect, though (for reasons which I shall presently explain) not so recorded on the poll.

Gentlemen, this election has been distinguished from both the former in which I bore a part by the good order and good-humour which (with some trifling exceptions) have generally prevailed throughout the course of it. When I first addressed you from this place, I took the liberty of exhorting you, so far as we were concerned, to set to the United Kingdom the example of a contest peaceably conducted. It appears to me, Gentlemen, upon the retrospect of all that has passed, that the caution which I then gave has never departed from your minds; and, when I learn, as I have done with grief to-day, the nature of the proceedings in some places where contests

are now carrying on, I cannot but congratulate you on the proud contrast which this town presents to the excesses of other popular elections.

Gentlemen, it is not that the conflict of principles is not here sufficiently strong; it is not that the shades of difference between parties are here but faintly marked; it is not that there is any lukewarmness in either of the parties which divide this town, (God knows, not in you, Gentlemen,) either as to the side which you have chosen, or as to the principles which you profess. Far otherwise. But you know, Gentlemen, and you have taught others to know, that the fair, practical exercise of the British constitution allows the fullest scope for the expansion of every liberal sentiment, for the ebullition of every popular feeling, for the conflicting diversity of public principles, and even of personal partialities :—it allows fair scope for all these, within a boundary which is not to be overleaped; but within which the most swelling enthusiasm may find room to exert and to exhaust itself.

Gentlemen, for the moderation and good sense with which this contest has been conducted, we are indebted, first, I hope, to our sense of what we owed to ourselves : secondly, to the warning recollection of former transactions of the same kind, in which a spirit of a very different sort was allowed to introduce itself among you : thirdly, to the respect inspired by the firm and vigorous

exercise of authority on the part of the presiding magistracy of the town: and, fourthly, I should be unjust if I did not add, to the existence of dispositions, in this respect, similar to our own among the leading friends of all the candidates.

Gentlemen, there is no one quality which so effectually extracts the gall of political animosity as that generous British spirit which, while it is warm in conflict, is sedate and temperate after victory;—which, while it asserts itself, does justice to an enemy. Gentlemen, in this spirit, you will, I am sure, agree with me in feeling, and, so agreeing, will think that I do right in stating, for myself and you, that the representative of the candidate whose pretensions alone caused any contest,—(I will name him, because I name him with honour,)—Lord Molyneux, has conducted himself throughout with a propriety, a moderation, a grace as well as a spirit, which, though they have not enabled him to fasten his father's pretensions upon Liverpool, must, I am sure, have established for himself a claim to the good will and good opinion of his neighbours. Of this young nobleman I had no personal knowledge till I saw him on the hustings: but it is but justice to say, that, in a situation so new and trying for so young a man, his whole demeanour has been such as to win, day by day, upon the regard of his opponents.

But, Gentlemen, why is it, selfishly speaking, that I am thus lavish in the praises of an antagonist, (antagonist, indeed, in one sense, he would be incorrectly called, because you well know that it was not against us that any contest was directed;) —why is it, I say, that I am lavish in the praises of our antagonist? First, because they are just: secondly, because, as we are, I trust, disposed in temper, so in prudence we can afford to render that justice. Be the antagonist who he may; rate his private character and personal behaviour as high as any man can rate them; still there is nothing in all this that could reconcile the people of Liverpool to the principles on which Lord Sefton rested his pretensions to their favour. The courtesies of private life, the civilities of good neighbourhood, may obtain for the individual a place in your esteem: but the delegation of a public trust requires confidence in approved public principles; and where that confidence is wanting, the delegation must ever be solicited in vain.

Gentlemen, one word, and only one word more, with respect to the election. It closed, as you all know, with the following state of the poll: 1,654 for myself; 1,444 for General Gascoyne; 1,280 for Lord Sefton; leaving to me, over Lord Sefton, a majority of 374. But, Gentlemen, I have already stated to you, that the recorded majority would be only an unfair criterion of our

relative strength. I should, perhaps, have passed this topic over, had I not seen an address from the committee of Lord Sefton, which exhorts the defeated party to take comfort from the smallness of our majority at the close of the poll. Gentlemen, I have no objection to their taking comfort from any circumstance whatever which they may think capable of affording it. But I object, in this case, to their taking a fallacious view of your resources and of their own; because such a view might provoke new trials of strength, to the unnecessary and unprofitable disturbance of the peace of this community. It is fit that neither they should be misled nor you disheartened by erroneous calculations.

Gentlemen, Lord Sefton's friends came forward yesterday morning (as, in my address to you of the preceding evening, I had confidently, ventured to anticipate) with a fair acknowledgment that they saw no chance of success remaining; and they proposed immediately to withdraw their candidate, on one condition only,—that we should not persist in prosecuting the poll for the sake of swelling our majority. Gentlemen, it was, in one sense, a great sacrifice to *you* to desist from the prosecution of the poll: the freemen were at hand, they were pressing eagerly forward to record their votes, and a few short hours would have swelled your numbers to such an amount as would have stifled for ever all hope of a successful

contest against you. But the spirit in which the proposal was made, the reasonableness of the expectation that a voluntary abdication, however prudent, should not be made an occasion of triumph; and this farther consideration, that, if my friends had persisted to poll after the third candidate had withdrawn, *they* would have been exclusively answerable for the peace of the town;—these considerations, together with the recommendation of your chief magistrate, which it was the duty of all parties to obey, determined us to accept the condition annexed to the withdrawal of Lord Sefton's name. We accordingly ceased to poll as soon as he ceased to be a candidate for the representation of Liverpool. But, when I find an inference drawn from the positive numbers which the proposal and acceptance of this condition have left upon the poll-books, which inference is totally at variance with the fact, I think it my duty to set right both those who infer thus rashly, and those who might be deceived by this false inference, by stating, what I am enabled to do from the most authentic information, that the number of freemen who were ready within call to be added to my majority, as fast as their names could be written down, was, at least, 500. I confess this is a greater number than I had reckoned upon, or could believe, till it was ascertained upon authority not to be disputed: and I will add, that, in naming this number, I still

deduct, for the sake of being safe, upwards of 100 from the lowest estimate that has been communicated to me.

To calculate, therefore, the value of our majority, you must add to the 374 which appeared on the close of the poll, *at least* the number of 500 as that by which it would have been augmented within a few hours. It is important that this fact should be known, because, during three successive elections, a contest has been maintained against your choice, on the belief (I am willing to suppose) that there was strength enough in the opposite principles to entitle those who held them to dictate the representation of the town. It is material, that, on this point, you should be convinced, because on the perfect understanding of it, not the certainty of triumph, but the chance of escaping contest hereafter may depend.

Gentlemen, in other places, at this moment, contests are carrying on with excesses which disgrace the name of liberty. The like excesses were confidently predicted here. But when it is known, that the vast population of this town has been now for eight days in perpetual concourse and fermentation, without producing, so far as I know, any one serious tumult, or any thing like a combat of blood, your town will exhibit, to all the populous towns and cities of the kingdom, an example which, I hope, it may not be too late for them to imitate.

There is another consideration arising out of these circumstances, and out of the newfangled doctrines of the reformers, which I will take this occasion of suggesting to you. The spirit of popular elections, Gentlemen, is the spirit which keeps alive the frame of the constitution,—which gives it strength, and motion, and activity. But, Gentlemen, even after our own good conduct, to which I allot its full value,—after the experience of this election, so different from the last, I would ask any sober man among you, whether that project, which is now the favourite with the reformers, of indefinitely multiplying the number of voters, and multiplying sevenfold the occasions of exercising that franchise, would bear the test of experiment?—whether the election which we have seen (and it is the best specimen of popular election that I ever saw or ever heard of)—whether this election itself could recur annually, accompanied with an extension of the suffrage to half a million of persons more than now enjoy it, without infinite and intolerable mischief? If these silly doctrines of annual parliaments and universal suffrage could be inculcated into the people by their demagogues, is there any doubt, that the effect of them would be to derange and destroy the orderly, regulated play of the British constitution?—that constitution which works well because it is orderly, because it is regulated, because its movements are calculated and known:—while you, Gentlemen,

would, by these boasted improvements, be disfranchised at one sweeping blow; and upon your disfranchisement would be raised a system—if system it can be called that has nothing but wild and untried theories for its basis—which, if attempted to be carried practically into effect, would lead to boundless anarchy and confusion.

If, therefore, Gentlemen, there be those who think, that freedom cannot be sufficiently infused into our government, unless the right of suffrage be universally extended, I appeal to your own good sense for a refutation of their absurd proposition. But, if there should be others, who, contemplating the disgusting and disgraceful violences which are now practising under the pretence of free election in other places, could almost make up their minds to think, that the evil inhering in the system of popular election was greater than the benefit,—to those reasoners I would triumphantly hold up the light of your example; proving yourselves worthy, as you do, of the franchises which you enjoy, by the manner in which you exercise them.

Gentlemen, I have nothing now to add, but my sincere and fervent acknowledgments for all that you have mixed in this contest of personal kindness and unvarying attachment to myself. I have no personal claim to your partiality. You chose me for my public principles. You called me in to your aid, six years ago, to fight your

battle against a presumptuous attempt to usurp the whole representation of the town,—to do that which it has now been falsely imputed to you that you intended. The attempted usurpation was defeated. It was not your fault that your antagonists, by grasping at too much, lost all. It is for them to acquiesce in the consequence—which could not be unforeseen—of their own inconsiderate ambition. It is for you to use, discreetly and temperately, the advantage which their indiscretion and intemperance, in 1812, put into your hands ; and, in using it, to remember, above all things, that the question at issue, between you and your antagonists, is—not on *whom* you shall confer the representation of Liverpool, (for the individual to be selected is of comparatively little consequence,)—but what are the public principles which that representation shall manifest and maintain.

Gentlemen, I now take my leave of you with the expression of my warmest gratitude and affection ; but without any other professions than those which I have already made. Of your local and particular interests you have had opportunities to judge whether I am a faithful guardian. My public principles are what they were when you first chose me. Those principles are yours as they are mine. I think you are not likely to change them ; and I am sure I am not.

SPEECH

AT THE PUBLIC DINNER, IN THE MUSIC-HALL, ON MONDAY,
THE 29TH OF JUNE, 1818, AFTER HIS HEALTH HAD
BEEN DRUNK.

GENTLEMEN,

IT was at my suggestion, that your worthy chairman had the goodness to make a slight alteration in the order of the toasts as they stand on the printed card, and to propose, before my health, which you have just done me the honour to drink, the health of those persons by whose suffrages I have been elevated to the situation of your representative, and of those who, had their suffrages been wanted, would have contributed to that elevation. It is in the natural order of things, Gentlemen, that cause should precede effect: and, before you expressed your rejoicing on my return, I was anxious that due acknowledgment should have been paid to those whose votes, or whose intentions to come forward,—intentions as notorious and as efficacious as their votes,—gave effect to the wishes of this great community in my favour.

H H

Gentlemen, six years have elapsed since I was first placed in that envied situation. Search the records of history, where shall we find six years so fertile in events; and in events not only of such immense importance, but of such various character,—at one time so awful and appalling, at another so full of encouragement and of glory? We have, within this period of time, had war—peace—war again—and again a peace, which, I flatter myself, is now settling itself for a long duration.

In many of those changes, Gentlemen, as they were taking place, and with respect to all of them while they were yet in doubtful futurity, the opinions which I hold with you, and by holding which with you I am alone worthy to represent you, have been controverted by predictions which, in prospect, it would have been presumptuous to dispute, but which, in retrospect, it is now pleasant to contemplate.

When I first, in obedience to your call, presented myself before you, it was at that period of a war, already of near twenty years duration, in which the crisis of the fate of nations seemed to be arrived. It was at that period of the campaign, destined to be decisive of that war, in which the enemy appeared in his most gigantic dimensions, and had begun to run his most extravagant career. It would be little disparagement to the stoutest heart to say, that it shrunk from

the contemplation of a might so overwhelming ; and it required, perhaps, as much courage as sagacity to derive, from the ill-compounded materials of the colossus, a hope or an expectation of its fall. We were, indeed, loudly told, at that time, that resistance was altogether hopeless ; and you, Gentlemen, were encouraged to believe, that if, by rejecting me, whose politics were supposed to be identified with the prosecution of the war, and by returning to Parliament, as your representatives, those who then solicited your suffrages in opposition to me, you would mark your disapprobation of the continuance of so hopeless a contest, you would, by this demonstration of the opinion of so considerable a part of the British empire, infallibly produce a peace, with all its attendant blessings.

Against these fallacious but inviting assurances, with all the responsibility that belonged to the anticipation of brighter prospects in the midst of overwhelming gloom, and to the denial of associations familiar in the mouths and in the minds of men, I ventured to tell you, that peace was not in your power, except through the road of victory : and I ventured to tell you further, that peace, if sought through any other path, would not be lasting ; and that, come when it might, it would not come, in the first instance, with all the blessings of ordinary peace in its train.

At the end of the period which has elapsed,

compare what I then said to you with what has actually taken place.

If, at the time of which I am speaking, in 1812, this great town had contributed its share towards forcing a change in the national councils, by rejecting the man whose political existence was identified with the success of the war, and by choosing others in his room whose reputation depended upon its failure; and if, Gentlemen, you had had the misfortune to succeed in forcing such a change, I ask you, whether you believe that England would have stood erect, as she has done, with her enemy prostrate at her feet, and with Europe saved by her assistance?

But, Gentlemen, as if to defeat and discredit the professors of political prophecy, you have had also a trial of peace, not wholly corresponding with their anticipations. I told you, in 1812, that nothing was easier than to draw flattering views of distant prospects; but that there were circumstances to be taken into account in the estimate of war and peace which baffled calculation. I told you, that THE WAR (not WAR generally, as has falsely been imputed, but THE WAR in which we were then engaged) was, from its peculiar character, one in which, though the common characteristics of peace,—such as, tranquillity, and absence of bloodshed, and freedom from alarm,—were necessarily suspended, yet the springs of enterprise were not cut off, nor the

activity of commerce altogether paralyzed: nor would the restoration of peace necessarily and at once restore the state of things which so long and so extraordinary a war had interrupted.

And why, Gentlemen? Because I was desirous, as was, I say, falsely imputed to me, of dissociating the natural combinations of war and peace from their respective attributes? of holding out war as, for its own sake, desirable, and peace as, in itself, unlovely? No, Gentlemen; but because I wished to represent to you things as they really were, or, at least, as, in my own honest judgment, I saw them; because I wished to dissipate the prejudices which were attempted to be raised against a war on the issue of which our national existence depended, by pressing into the service those common-place arguments against war, which, however abstractedly true, were not true as to the war in question;—and by holding out all those common-place inducements to peace, which, though also true in the abstract, could not have been true of any peace concluded on ignominious terms, and have not been found true of the first years of a peace succeeding to a war of such unexampled effort and protraction.

That the war had had the effect of opening unusual channels of commercial enterprise: that it had given a new and extraordinary stimulus to commercial activity and enterprise: that the war had created—I do not say a wholesome, I do not

say a substantial, I do not say a permanent prosperity;—but that it had created a prosperity peculiar to itself, and which atoned, in some measure, for its evils, and enabled the country, in some measure, to bear up against the difficulties incident to war;—all these were matters of fact, which, as such, I stated to you :—and stated them as affording, not motives, but consolations—not inducements to prolong, beyond necessity, a war which might be safely terminated at will, but reasons for bearing patiently evils to which it was not in our power to put an end. That this was a forced and unnatural state of things, neither I nor any man pretended to deny:—but whether we alone could enjoy a sound and natural repose, in the forced and unnatural state of Europe;—whether any peace which could be made by us, while all Europe remained under the control of our enemy, would be a peace worthy of the name;—this was a question which might fairly be mooted, without depreciating the blessings of peace, or denying the general preferableness of peace to war. Our adversaries represented the war as uncompensated evil and voluntary self-infliction: peace, as unqualified prosperity, and as immediately within our grasp. My business—the business of truth—was to show, that **THE WAR**—though all war is full of evil—had yet mitigations, and, besides, would not cease at our bidding;—that peace would not come at our

call, and, besides, that, when it came, it would bring with it its privations. The stimulus of the war withdrawn, manufacturing industry would necessarily languish: the channels of commerce, forced open by the war, having closed, commercial enterprise must necessarily be checked till new channels were explored; and the mere cessation of the "trade of war" itself, in all its various branches, must both discontinue the occupation of a population which it had created, and throw additional crowds on occupations already overstocked. Here were causes sufficient for the inevitable privations and derangements of a first year of peace after any war,—but much more after a war of such extraordinary magnitude and extension.

It required no great sagacity to foresee these things: but, in those who did foresee them, it would have been, at least, disingenuous to assert—or to suffer the assertions to go uncontroverted—that the war was our single and voluntary suffering, and that peace was not only attainable, but would be an instant and perfect cure.

Such, Gentlemen, is the true account of that temporary stagnation of commercial industry and enterprise which has been insidiously imputed to national exhaustion; of the difficulty in providing employment for an exuberant population (the harvest of a long war) upon the sudden return of

peace, and before the world had yet righted itself after all its convulsions.

Either our antagonists foresaw these immediate and necessary consequences of the discontinuance of war, or they did not. If they did foresee them, would it not have been fair to have shaded a little more carefully the bright prospects which they painted of the peace to come?—if not, would it not be fair in them to acknowledge, that they had been too sanguine in their anticipations? But, what surely is not fair nor reasonable, is, that no sooner was the peace, which they had so long clamoured for, obtained, than they proceeded, with as much pathos as they had bestowed upon the evils of war, to deplore the sufferings of that moment which they had predicted as one of unqualified happiness!

They began their lamentations over languishing industry, and stinted commerce, and unemployed population; as if these evils were not the natural and necessary consequences of unavoidably operating causes; as if they were the creation of some malignant influence, which, whether in war or in peace, blighted the destinies of the country.

Is it intended to maintain this proposition, that, in order to produce the blessings with which peace ought to be accompanied, the war ought to have been concluded with defeat, and the peace to have been a peace of humiliation?

If so, I can understand the arguments and acknowledge the consistency of those who pretend to have been disappointed at the tardy reappearance of the blessings which they promised us;—for, undoubtedly, the war was concluded with triumphs, which must have deranged all the anticipations which were founded on the basis of unconditional surrender and submission.

But, Gentlemen, labouring, as I do, under the imputation of being a great lover of war, I am almost afraid to say, that there are some things in the war which I regret, and some things in the peace which I like as little as even those privations of which we have been speaking, but which are, happily, in a course of daily diminution. The war divided the political parties of the country on one great question, which involved and absorbed all minor considerations. With war, party has not ceased : but our differences are of a sort more ignoble and more alarming. The line of demarcation during the war was—resistance or nonresistance to a foreign enemy : the line of demarcation now is—maintenance or subversion of our internal institutions.

Gentlemen, it does seem somewhat singular, and I conceive that the historian of future times will be at a loss to imagine how it should happen,—that, at this particular period, at the close of a war of such unexampled brilliancy, in which this country had acted a part so much

beyond its physical strength and its apparent resources;—there should arise a sect of philosophers in this country, who begin to suspect something rotten in the British constitution. The history of Europe, for the last twenty-five years, is something like this. A power went forth, animated with the spirit of evil, to overturn every community of the civilized world. Before this dreadful assailant, empires, and monarchies, and republics bowed: some were crushed to the earth, and some bought their safety by compromise. In the midst of this wide-spread ruin, among tottering columns and falling edifices, one fabric alone stood erect and braved the storm; and not only provided for its own internal security, but sent forth, at every portal, assistance to its weaker neighbours. On this edifice floated that ensign, [pointing to the English ensign,] a signal of rallying to the combatant and of shelter to the fallen.

To an impartial observer—I will not say to an inhabitant of this little fortress—to an impartial observer, in whatever part of the world, one should think something of this sort would have occurred. Here is a fabric constructed upon some principles not common to others in its neighbourhood; principles which enable it to stand erect while every thing is prostrate around it. In the construction of this fabric there must be some curious felicity, which the eye of the

philosopher would be well employed in investigating, and which its neighbours may profit by adopting. This, I say, Gentlemen, would have been an obvious inference. But what shall we think of their understandings who draw an inference directly the reverse? and who say to us—
 “ You have stood when others have fallen; when
 “ others have crouched, you have borne your-
 “ selves aloft : you alone have resisted the power
 “ which has shaken and swallowed up half the
 “ civilized world. We like not this suspicious
 “ peculiarity. There must be something wrong
 “ in your internal conformation.” With this unhappy curiosity, and in the spirit of this perverse analysis, they proceed to dissect our constitution. They find that, like other states, we have a monarch : that a nobility, though not organized like ours, is common to all the great empires of Europe : but that our distinction lies in a popular assembly, which gives life, and vigour, and strength to the whole frame of the government. Here, therefore, they find the seat of our disease. Our peccant part is, undoubtedly, the House of Commons. Hence our presumptuous exemption from what was the common lot of all our neighbours : the anomaly ought forthwith to be corrected ; and, therefore, the House of Commons must be reformed.

Gentlemen, it cannot but have struck you as somewhat extraordinary, that whereas, in

speaking of foreign sovereigns, our reformers are never very sparing of uncourtly epithets; that whereas, in discussing the general principles of government, they seldom omit an opportunity of discrediting and deriding the privileged orders of society; yet, when they come to discuss the British constitution, nothing can be more respectful than their language towards the crown; nothing more forbearing than their treatment of the aristocracy. With the House of Commons alone they take the freedom of familiarity; upon it they pour out all the vials of their wrath, and exhaust their denunciations of amendment.

Gentlemen, this, though extraordinary, is not unintelligible. The reformers are wise in their generation. They know well enough,—and have read plainly enough in our own history,—that the prerogatives of the crown and the privileges of the peerage would be but as dust in the balance against a preponderating democracy. They mean democracy, and nothing else. And, give them but a House of Commons constructed on their own principles,—the peerage and the throne may exist for a day, but may be swept from the face of the earth by the first angry vote of such a House of Commons.

It is, therefore, utterly unnecessary for the reformers to declare hostility to the crown; it is, therefore, utterly superfluous for them to make war against the peerage. They know that, let

but their principles have full play, the crown and the peerage would be to the constitution which they assail but as the baggage to the army,—and the destruction of them but as the gleanings of the battle. They know that the battle is with the House of Commons, as at present constituted;—and that, *that* once overthrown, and another popular assembly constructed on their principle,—as the creature and depository of the people's power, and the unreasoning instrument of the people's will,—there would not only be no chance, but (I will go further for them in avowal, though not in intention, than they go for themselves) there would not be a pretence for the existence of any other branch of the constitution.

Gentlemen, the whole fallacy lies in this: the reformers reason from false premises, and, therefore, are driving on their unhappy adherents to false and dangerous conclusions. The constitution of this country is A MONARCHY, controlled by two assemblies: the one hereditary, and independent alike of the crown and the people: the other elected by and for the people, but elected for the purpose of controlling and not of administering the government. The error of the reformers, if error it can be called, is, that they argue as if the constitution of this country was a broad and level democracy, inlaid (for ornament sake) with a peerage, and topped (by sufferance) with a crown.

If they say, that, for such a constitution, that is, in effect, for an uncontrolled democracy, the present House of Commons is not sufficiently popular, they are right: but such a constitution is not what we have or what we desire. We are born under a monarchy, which it is our duty, as much as it is for our happiness, to preserve; and which there cannot be a shadow of doubt that the reforms which are recommended to us would destroy.

I love the monarchy, Gentlemen, because, limited and controlled as it is in our happy constitution, I believe it to be not only the safest depository of power, but the surest guardian of liberty. I love the system of popular representation, Gentlemen:—who can have more cause to value it highly than I feel at this moment—reflecting on the triumphs which it has earned for me, and addressing those who have been the means of achieving them? But of popular representation, I think, we have enough for every purpose of jealous, steady, corrective, efficient control over the acts of that monarchical power, which, for the safety and for the peace of the community, is lodged in one sacred family, and descendible from sire to son.

If any man tell me, that the popular principle in the House of Commons is not strong enough for effective control, nor diffused enough to ensure sympathy with the people, I appeal to the whole course of the transactions of the last war;—I

desire to have cited to me the instances in which the House of Commons has failed, either to express the matured and settled opinion of the nation, or to convey it to the crown. But I warn those who may undertake to make the citation, that they do not (as, in fact, they almost always do) substitute their own for the national opinion, and then complain of its having been imperfectly echoed in the House of Commons.

If, on the other hand, it be only meant to say, that the House of Commons is not the *whole government* of the country,—which, if all power be not only *for* but *in* the people, the House of Commons ought to be, if the people were adequately represented,—I answer, thank God it is not so!—God forbid it should ever aim at becoming so!

But they look far short of the ultimate effect of the doctrines of the present day, who do not see that their tendency is not to make a House of Commons such as, in theory, it has always been defined—a third branch of the legislature; but to absorb the legislative and executive powers into one; to create an immediate delegation of the whole authority of the people—to which, practically, nothing could, and, in reasoning, nothing ought to stand in opposition.

Gentlemen, it would be well if these doctrines were the ebullitions of the moment, and ended with the occasions which naturally give them

their freest play; I mean, with the season of popular elections. But, unfortunately, disseminated as they are among all ranks of the community, they are doing permanent and incalculable mischief. How lamentably is experience lost on mankind! for when—in what age, in what country of the world—have doctrines of this sort been reduced to practice, without leading, through anarchy, to military despotism? The revolution of the seasons is not more certain than is this connexion of events in the course of moral nature.

Gentlemen, to theories like these you will do me the justice to remember that I have always opposed myself; not more since I have had the honour to represent this community, than when I was uncertain how far my opinions on such subjects might coincide with yours.

For opposing these theories, Gentlemen, I have become an object of peculiar obloquy: but I have borne that obloquy with the consciousness of having discharged my duty;—and with the consolation, that the time was not far distant when I should come here among you, (to whom alone I owe an account of my public conduct,)—when I should have an opportunity of hearing from you, whether I had (as I flattered myself) spoken the sense of the second commercial community in England; and when, if—unfortunately and contrary to my belief—I had

separated myself in opinion from you, I should learn the grounds of that separation.

Gentlemen, my object, in political life, has always been, rather to reconcile the nation to the lot which has fallen to them, (surely a most glorious and blessed lot among nations!) than to aggravate incurable imperfections, and to point out imaginary and unattainable excellences for their admiration. I have done so, because, though I am aware that more splendidly popular systems of government might be devised than that which it is our happiness to enjoy, it is, I believe in my conscience, impossible to devise one in which all the good qualities of human nature should be brought more beneficially into action,—in which there should be as much order and as much liberty,—in which property (the conservative principle of society) should operate so fairly, with a just but not an overwhelming weight,—in which industry should be so sure of its reward, talents of their due ascendancy, and virtue of the general esteem.

The theories of preternatural purity are founded on a notion of doing away with all these accustomed relations,—of breaking all the ties by which society is held together. Property is to have no influence—talents no respect—virtue no honour, among their neighbourhood. Naked, abstract political rights are to be set up against the authorities of nature and of reason: and the result of

suffrages, thus freed from all the ordinary influences which have operated upon mankind from the beginning of the world, is to be—the erection of some untried system of politics, of which it may be sufficient to say, that it could not last a day,—that, if it rose with the mists of the morning, it would dissolve in the noontide sun.

Gentlemen, one ill consequence of these brilliant schemes, even where they are the visions of unsound imagination, rather than the suggestions of crafty mischief, is, that they tend to dissatisfy the minds of the uninformed with the actual constitution of their country.

To maintain that constitution has been the unvarying object of my political life: and the maintenance of it, in these latter days, has, I have said, exposed me to obloquy and to hatred;—to the hatred of those who believe either their own reputation for sagacity, or their own means of success, to be connected with a change in the present institutions of the country.

We have heard something of numbers in the course of the present election; and there is in numbers, I confess, a coincidence which gratifies and pleases me. The number *three hundred* was that of the majority which assured my return. It is the number, I am informed, of those who are assembled here to greet me this day. The last time that I had heard of the number *three hundred*, in a way at all interesting to myself, was in

an intimation, publicly conveyed to me, that precisely that number of heroes had bound themselves, by oath to each other, to assassinate me. Gentlemen, against my three hundred assassins I put my three hundred friends,—and I feel neither my life nor my popularity in danger.

Mr. CANNING concluded by expressing his acknowledgments for the honour done him in drinking his health, and by proposing that of the worthy chairman.

SPEECH

ON THE SAME OCCASION, AFTER THE HEALTH OF “HIS MAJESTY’S PRESENT MINISTERS, THE FIRM AND UNSHAKEN SUPPORTERS OF THE PRINCIPLES OF MR. PITT,” HAD BEEN DRUNK.

GENTLEMEN,

As one of that body to whom you have just paid so cordial a compliment, it becomes me, on their behalf, to express the acknowledgment which I, as one of them, feel, and which, I am sure, they will feel collectively, for the honour which you have done to us.

Gentlemen, for myself I am bound to say something, because I must disclaim any share in much of that credit to which my colleagues are entitled for having brought the late war to its glorious conclusion. But those who have witnessed my political life well know, that never, at any moment when I was separated from the councils of the crown, did I withhold my firm and unqualified support from the great measures which were necessary for maintaining the war with all our strength, until it could be concluded with safety and with honour. At the period when I had a share in those councils began the Peninsular war; from which *I* then augured, and from which *all* are now agreed in dating, the deliverance of Europe. It was during my absence from the cabinet, that the spirit of resistance, kindled in the Peninsula, communicated itself to the other nations of Europe. By that spirit was animated a combination of states, the most powerful, perhaps, that history records; and by that combination was achieved a peace, such as the most sanguine imagination would have hesitated to anticipate; but of which the councils of Mr. Pitt had long ago laid the foundation.

In equal consonance to the tenor of those councils, his Majesty's present ministers are determined to cultivate the peace which has been so nobly achieved; and to maintain the country in the enjoyment of internal quiet and of external

prosperity,—not by encouraging vain projects of fanciful reform; but by rallying the good sense and sound feelings of the nation to the support of our free, monarchical constitution.

In that path of internal peace, as in the more brilliant course of national glory, undoubtedly the present government endeavour to follow the footsteps of Mr. Pitt. Where they fail, let it be understood that the failure is to be imputed to the inadequacy of the pupils, and not to the imperfection of the principles of their great master,—to any forgetfulness of his precepts, or any willing deviation from his example.

SPEECH

ON THE SAME OCCASION, AFTER THE HEALTH OF “THE RIGHT HONOURABLE WILLIAM HUSKISSON, AND THANKS TO HIM FOR HIS ATTENTION TO THE INTERESTS OF LIVERPOOL,” HAD BEEN DRUNK.

GENTLEMEN,

I RISE to return my own thanks, and those which, I am sure, I should have been commissioned by my right honourable friend to return in his

name, for the manner in which you have done him the honour to drink his health ;—a man whom I never can describe more aptly than I once had occasion to describe him to some among you ; as being, what he undoubtedly is, the *best man of business in England* ;—a man whose extraordinary talents, matured by long reflection and long experience, have qualified him as one of the ablest practical statesmen that could be engaged in the concerns of a commercial country.

Gentlemen, the praises which you have justly bestowed on him recall to my recollection a debt of gratitude which I owe to you, for the indulgence received from you two years ago ;—which gave him, during my absence, those opportunities of serving you that have won so deservedly upon your regard and esteem. Gentlemen, you may be assured for him, that, however totally disconnected from you, as you may be assured for me, whenever our connexion may cease, we shall be anxious to promote, by all means in our power, the interests of Liverpool ; not only from sentiments of gratitude, but because we are quite convinced, that, in promoting the interests of this great commercial town, we secure to the general prosperity of Great Britain one of its most useful and efficient supports. I will not say, that if the interests of the nation were, in any instance, at variance with those of Liverpool, even as your member I would take your part ; but I will say,

that, whether your member or no, I shall always retain the same desire,—not to benefit you by any partial sacrifice of the general good in your favour, but—to advance your greatness and prosperity, which are but the samples and epitome of the greatness and prosperity of England.

Gentlemen, you have just recognised, in the toast which preceded the health of my right honourable friend, that identity between the landed and commercial interests of the kingdom, the principle of which I am taking the liberty to inculcate. The one interest is, indeed, inherent in the soil, and inseparable from it. But that soil is increased tenfold in its value, and the tenure by which it is held is increased tenfold in its security, by that commercial enterprise which augments the wealth of the kingdom, and strengthens the sinews of its maritime power.

The consent of different orders is the strength and safety of the state. To set one class of society against another is to endanger the whole. How much more when, as in the miserable politics of the present day, an attempt is made to set the poor against the rich, for the common destruction of both?

Gentlemen, your example and your authority may do much among the multitude whom you employ to protect them against the poison of such doctrines,—to satisfy them, that, as your prosperity depends upon the general prosperity

of the empire, so do their happiness and comfort depend upon the maintenance of that order, which not only consists with liberty, but is essential to it, and of that commerce of which liberty and order are the guardians.

Gentlemen, I now take leave of you,—with a sentiment which is not the less valuable because it is homely in its phrase, and which will convey, though it does not fully express, all my good wishes for your prosperity and happiness: I beg leave to give—“The good old town of Liverpool
“and the trade thereof.”

SPEECHES

DURING

THE ELECTION OF 1820.



INTRODUCTION.

AT this election Dr. Crompton was put forward as a candidate by the partisans of reform; and, in order to secure two bars, they added to *his* name Mr. Leyland's, without that gentleman's consent, however, and probably against his expressed determination. The hope, if any hope ever was indulged, of securing the doctor's election was chimerical; but the faction, true to their character, determined on nominating him, in order to annoy, by a hopeless opposition, the friends of Mr. Canning.

The election commenced on Wednesday, the 8th of March, Mr. Canning being nominated by John Bolton, Esq., and seconded by H. B. Hollinshead, Esq.; General Gascoyne by John

B. Aspinall, Esq., seconded by J. Leigh, Esq.; Dr. Crompton by Colonel Williams, seconded by Mr. R. E. Harvey; and Mr. Leyland by Mr. John Harvey, seconded by Mr. Edward Rushton.

The invectives with which the popular orators accompanied their nominations were answered by Mr. Canning in the clear and manly address that forms the first of the following collection. The poll was then opened, and, the oaths prescribed by the election law being administered to every freeman, as insisted upon by Dr. Crompton, the voting went on in the following daily progression :

	1st Day.	2d Day.	3d Day.	4th Day.	5th Day.	6th Day.	7th Day.
CANNING	161	358	559	767	1041	1405	1635
GASCOYNE	149	329	518	708	958	1297	1532
CROMPTON	54	129	189	234	286	321	345
LEYLAND	27	69	82	99	117	122	125

On the last day Dr. Crompton's party began to lose the little strength it had ever possessed: the voters came in so slowly that it was evident a speedy dissolution must take place; and towards three o'clock this vexatious contest terminated,

and the Right Honourable George Canning and General Gascoyne were declared duly elected.

Mr. Canning's wit and humour are conspicuously displayed towards the close of the first speech of this series. The following extracts from the speech delivered on the hustings by Dr. Crompton are necessary to the due appreciation of Mr. Canning's delicate raillery on the occasion :

" I consider the business in which I am about to engage as most serious. But, before I proceed to topics of more general interest, I must beg leave to contradict, and destroy as much as possible, a rumour which is spread abroad, that my opposition to the return of our late representatives is wholly vexatious. Fool, indeed, should I be to come forward and put myself to every inconvenience, in a place where I live, for such a purpose; and still greater fool, to expose myself thereby to the severe censures of Mr. Canning, whose exquisite wit and humour can turn into ridicule every thing, both sacred and human. The impartial page of history informs us, that Nero fiddled while Rome burned. Mr. Canning smiled when Colonel Williams flashed his crimes in his face."

The MAYOR (Sir John Tobin) here interposed, and requested Dr. Crompton to guard as much as possible against personalities, assuring him, at the same time, of his protection whilst addressing the freemen.

" I thank you, Mr. Mayor," continued the doctor, " for the offer of your protection, but I fear not the face of man. I was observing, when I was interrupted, that while Rome *fiddled*, Nero *burned*.—[Laughter.] I meant to say, that while

Rome burned Nero fiddled. But I cannot smile amidst the ruins of my country. When I look at what England was in the days of her glory, when there was plenty in every cottage of the realm, and look at what she now is, my heart sinks within me. When I see Englishmen oppressed in the manner they are, then my indignation is roused. I am indignant at seeing their hard earnings squandered away on useless placemen and pensioners—I did not mean to allude to Mr. Canning: he is welcome to his place; and,

Had he been man's friend below,
Canning had been a little god below.—[Laughter.]

When I see my fellow-creatures seized in the dead of the night, huddled into prisons, and afterwards discharged without a trial, then my heart misgives me, and I have a dreadful presage of the future."

The last speech of the following series is one of the most brilliant and argumentative which Mr. Canning ever delivered to his constituents. In it he has demonstrated, with a force of argument rarely equalled, and a power of eloquence never excelled, the revolutionary tendency of the plans of radical reform which were afloat at the period when it was delivered. This speech alone, in the opinion of all competent judges, is sufficient to stamp Mr. Canning the most finished orator of the present age.

SPEECH

ON THE HUSTINGS, BEFORE THE OPENING OF THE POLL,
THE 8TH OF MARCH, 1820.

MR. MAYOR,

I AM very far, Sir, from finding fault with any part of the speech of the gentleman* who has just addressed you; I am very far from finding fault with any part of the speech of the new candidate,† whom I have the pleasure of seeing before you, or of that of his friend‡ who nominated him; so far as they were directed, in the due exercise of the right and the duty of freemen, to the calling upon your representatives for an account of their principles and conduct.

It was not my intention, Sir, to have taken up a single moment of your time on this occasion; intending merely to present myself before you again on those grounds on which I was originally

* Mr. Rushton.

† Dr. Crompton.

‡ Colonel Williams.

selected by you—the grounds of my known political principles, and of the conduct which I have pursued in the face of my country. But, called on as I have been for more particular explanations, I need not apologize for foregoing my original intention, and for replying to that call as briefly as I can.

Sir, it may be expedient, for clearness of arrangement, to divide the charges which have been brought against me into two heads: the first, arising out of my connexion with the town of Liverpool; the other, relating to my parliamentary conduct.

It has been averred, by the honourable gentleman* whom I see opposite to me, that corruption obtains in the elections of this town to a degree which throws all other examples into the shade. I do not exactly understand whether the gentleman intended to imply, that this corruption had increased since the time of my first becoming connected with the town; or, simply, that such has been always the character of its elections, and that I, as well as others, have benefited by their corruption. I can only reply, that I, as an individual, am utterly ignorant, and, in that ignorance, am an utter disbeliever of such practices as the gentleman has imputed to his fellow-townsmen. I, at least, am no corrupter of the freemen,

* Mr. John Harvey.

and I desire not any voice that is not bestowed freely in my support.

If it is meant to state, as a charge against me, what is perfectly true, that I have been in the habit, ever since my first connexion with you as your representative, of receiving, from men of all parties in your town, applications,—some upon subjects of mere business,—some for what is understood by the term interest, in the fair and allowable sense,—and some of a mixed character, in which interest and business are inevitably blended; and that I have not been backward in rendering my assistance to those who have so applied to me;—I plead guilty to that charge, and I am only at a loss to discover what there is of criminality in it. But have I, on such occasions, ever prefaced the exertion of my humble talents or influence, in behalf of any one who now hears me, by demanding to know what vote had been given by him at the last election, or what were the local or the public politics of the person who happened to apply to me? If there be that freeman present who can come forward, either for himself or others, and say that he or they have suffered in their fair interest, or been deserted in the furtherance of a just claim, or have been put aside by me, even in the prosecution of troublesome and complicated concerns, because he had not voted for me,—because even he had taken the most active part against me;—

I call upon that freeman to bring such charge forward as openly and manfully as the gentleman before me* has brought forward his charges of other kinds.†——Then, Sir, I understand, from the observations of my new and honourable antagonist, that in that part of the duty of a representative I have never failed.

I come next to an insinuation brought forward by the gentleman‡ who spoke last, respecting the disposal of patronage, and the appointment to those small offices in your port, to which, after all, some one must be appointed, and for the appointment to which some one must recommend. Undoubtedly such recommendations have been made by me from time to time; and, undoubtedly, for the characters and fitness of the persons to be recommended, I have relied upon the testimony of different freemen to whom they were known. It would be idle to affect any disguise upon this point, and I know not why I should affect any. Not in Liverpool only, but in every other place in the kingdom, it has always been considered the duty as well as the privilege of a representative to offer such recommendations; and I know

* Mr. Rushton.

† Mr. Canning here paused for a reply, when Dr. Crompton observed, that he could bear his testimony to the truth of what Mr. Canning had just said. Persons the most opposed in politics to Mr. Canning had spoken to him (Dr. Crompton) of the benefit which they had derived from Mr. Canning's assistance in their concerns.

‡ Mr. Rushton.

no other mode through which he could satisfy himself, in each instance, of the worthiness of each particular applicant. But the insinuation is, that such appointments have been corruptly bestowed, and that this patronage has been scandalously bartered. On this point, again, I affirm my utter ignorance, and, with that ignorance, my utter disbelief of the charge. Confident in the purity of my own conduct, I have no hesitation in also disclaiming such a charge on the part of my friends. But, as no man can pretend, upon any matter of human conduct, to affirm an universal negative, all I can further say in support of my assertion is this—Let any freeman, let the gentleman who has made the charge, mention to me any instance in which my patronage has been unworthily abused, and I will join with him, and will exert myself as earnestly as he can, to probe to the bottom such alleged abuse.

The same gentleman* has, in a very eloquent and impressive manner, invoked, in aid of the present contest, the substance of that shadow which, as he represents, so much appalled me in 1816. He promises me, at last, to exhibit something more to my discomfiture than the name of Mr. Leyland. Sir, I am glad to hear it. No doubt, Mr. Leyland, thus announced, is among those whom I am now addressing. I know not

* Mr. Rushton.

his person indeed, and, therefore, cannot be assured that he is present. But, if he really be so, or if he really intends coming forward in his own person, to Mr. Leyland, as well as to any other candidate that may be opposed to me, I hope to behave with the courtesy to which a brother candidate, however formidable as an antagonist, is entitled. If, on the former occasion to which the gentleman refers, I spoke at all slightly of Mr. Leyland, it was not of his person which I spoke, but of the unfair use which was made of his name, either without his knowledge, or against his repeated protestations of a determination to take no part in the contest. Let him appear—and I have nothing to say to him or of him but what is perfectly respectful: but, should the trick of 1816 be played over again, I shall again say plainly what I shall think, both of those who practise it, and those who suffer it to be practised.

I have thus, I think, disposed of most of the topics, of a local nature, which have been brought forward by the several gentlemen who have preceded me. Now for those of a more general nature. When first I presented myself before you, on your summons of 1812, my public principles—my principles of toryism, if you will—my declared opposition to the wild theories of undefined reform—were as well known to you all as they are at the present day. It is strange,

therefore, that I am now catechized on that account. I am to learn that Liverpool has changed its principles, before I can apologize for mine.

The honourable colonel* who opened the discussion, I know, has always been an advocate for the wildest and most latitudinarian principles of parliamentary reform; and he has been so, I have no doubt, from a conscientious conviction, not only that such an extension of the right of suffrage would ensure good members of Parliament, but that, in proof of that result, he must himself become the object of the choice of his fellow-townsmen. The honourable colonel has, if I am not misinformed, in pursuance of this conviction, found one chosen spot in England in which that scheme of voting which he is anxious to introduce prevails in its greatest latitude; and I am even given to hope, that, as member for Preston, I shall have the honour of meeting him in another place, there to discuss at large the question of a reform of Parliament. I am most happy, that he has had this opportunity of bringing the operation of his principles to the test. I can assure the gallant colonel, and I extend the same assurance to the honourable gentleman,† that though I am not quite ready to abdicate the representation of Liverpool, for the sake of having

* Colonel Williams.

† Dr. Crompton.

him for my successor, I do earnestly wish that seats in the House of Commons were provided for them, and for any other eminent leader of the same principles, that in that house, face to face, we might have the advantage of entering with them upon the question of reform, at much greater length than I am now disposed to detain you.

But, Gentlemen, though I should detain you too long, were I to go now into the consideration of this question, I have no difficulty in stating my opinion, and it is an opinion which I have held just as strongly since I have had the honour of representing Liverpool, as when I sat in the House of Commons for a place less open to popular influence. I think that the House of Commons does best discharge its functions,—does best perform the part assigned to the House of Commons, by a representation of a mixed character. Even in this place, and addressing the most popular constituents, I do not disguise my opinion, that enough of direct popular representation enters into the present composition of the House of Commons;—enough for that wholesome agitation, for that continued contact with all the passions and feelings of the nation, which constitutes the certainty of a just and pure representative. I think even that those boroughs to which the honourable gentleman* has alluded

* Colonel Williams.

(I speak not of their corruptions, but of their legitimate character) are of essential service, as a part of the system of representation. I will go further, and say that if, by any wild species of reform, they could be extinguished, and if the representation were to become universally and exclusively popular, in the widest sense which the honourable colonel could give to that term; and if to that alteration were added the further improvement which he requires, that of an election recurring annually;—I say, that after the House of Commons had been so reformed, many years would not pass before there would be an end to our present happy frame of government—our mixed, monarchical constitution. That, Sir, is my decided opinion; it is an opinion which I shall be happy to explain more at large to the honourable colonel, when we meet in the House of Commons. This is not the place nor the occasion to argue it. The business of this day is to elect representatives for Liverpool, on the present imperfect plan of representation; and not to argue whether there shall or shall not be a reform in the Commons' House of Parliament.

The same gentleman* makes it a matter of accusation against me, that I venture to appeal to you again after the measures passed by Parliament in

* Mr. Rushton.

the session before Christmas. Of those measures, undoubtedly, I was, according to my measure and ability, a strenuous supporter. Those measures have restored the tranquillity of the country, and, I trust, will preserve it; and without those measures, I firmly believe that tranquillity could not have been preserved.

The gentleman thinks it hard, that the reformers, whom he describes as the most peaceable and orderly of mankind, should be confounded with the gang of assassins, to the atrocity of whose designs he has alluded. With respect to those designs, and to those unhappy persons whose fellowship he is so anxious to disclaim for the reformers, I will say nothing: first, because the persons are now awaiting their trial; and, secondly, because I might be suspected of speaking with some personal bias on the subject of their designs. Upon that part of the honourable gentleman's speech, therefore, I will not say a single word: but I must not so pass over the part which followed it, in which the honourable gentleman had recourse to the old fallacy, so often exposed, but so pertinaciously repeated, that measures directed to the repression of partial evil, are therefore directed against the community at large. This fallacy uniformly pervades all the arguments with respect to restrictive measures. Did ever any man suppose, that because murder is a crime punishable by our law,

the people of England are, therefore, stigmatized as murderers?—that, because there are specific statutes against frauds, and robberies, and burglaries, all the people of England have, therefore, been denounced by their legislature as fraudulent, and felonious, and burglarious? The law must be directed against the crime, however small may be the number of instances in which it is perpetrated, compared with the mass of the population which is not concerned in the guilt, but which would suffer by its unpunished perpetration. According to this mode of reasoning, not only the provisions of our statute-book, but the denunciations of the Decalogue itself must be held to be ungenerous insinuations, involving the innocent with the guilty, and calumniating the character of human kind.

From the enactments and debates of the last session, the honourable gentleman* has gone back still farther, to the discussions of a former session; and has taxed me, quite fairly I allow, and not uncivilly, though with all the vehemence with which it was natural that he should insist upon a topic which has been made, for some years, a subject of calumny against me. He has taxed me with certain expressions of mine, respecting the case of an individual taken up under the suspension of the Habeas Corpus. I

* Mr. Rushton.

will state to the honourable gentleman, for he seems to be altogether uninformed of it, the course of my argument on that occasion. I was exposing the frauds and falsehoods which had been palmed upon the House of Commons in certain statements which had been made to them, and in certain petitions which had been presented from individuals, complaining of the treatment which they had endured under the Suspension Act. Of these falsehoods I selected three, as peculiarly gross and unjustifiable, and as, fortunately, susceptible of being brought to the test of the most decisive contradiction. The first, I recollect, related to a supposed spy, of the name, I think, of Dewhurst, who was represented to have been seen in a gig of Sir John Byng's, at some specific time and place; the object of the falsehood being to implicate the military commander, and through him the government, in the transactions imputed to this man. On further examination it turned out, that of the two elements of this falsehood neither existed; that there was no such man as Dewhurst, and that Sir John Byng had no gig. And I did humbly exhibit to the House of Commons the direct and complete falsification of this story, as a specimen of the devices by which the conduct of government and its agents had been belied. The second of the instances which I selected is not at this moment immediately present to my recollection. But the third is that to

which the gentleman has alluded ; and the particulars of which were as follows :—A petition had been presented from a man whose name he has mentioned, stating that the irons with which he had been loaded, when taken into custody, had brought on that complaint under which he described himself as labouring. It was distinctly stated in that petition, not that, having such a complaint upon him, he was nevertheless taken up, (as the gentleman seems to imagine,) but that the apprehension and restraint had *produced* on this poor man so terrible a calamity. The petition went on to describe the process of an operation, rendered necessary in this case, with all the disgusting detail of surgical particularity. It was quite obvious, that this description was intended to inflame the minds of all who should hear it against the supposed authors of the calamity under which the poor man laboured, and, by necessary inference, of the sufferings incident to the treatment of it. I made inquiry into the matter of this petition, and communications were voluntarily made to me, from which I learnt, to my infinite astonishment, that, so far from its being the effect of his irons, and the immediate consequence, therefore, of his confinement, the man had been afflicted with his complaint for about twenty years ; and that, so far from being aggravated by his imprisonment, he had, during that imprisonment, been cured at the public

expense. Nay, I learnt, on what I believed, and still believe, to be incontestable authority, that, in the first moment of his liberation, he had expressed his gratitude for the care which had been taken of him; and that it was not till some time afterwards, and upon mature reflection or advice, that he was induced to accuse government as the author of his long-standing disease. Could any thing be more gross than such an imposture? The calamity was itself grievous enough; but was it not shameful to ascribe to harsh and cruel treatment the result of natural infirmity? And, if I indignantly exposed the baseness of such a fraud, is it to be inferred that I was, more than any man who heard me then, or who hears me now, insensible to human suffering? Those who draw such an inference are guilty of a gross calumny against me. If, in expressing a just indignation at such a fraud, any words escaped me which could, in any fair mind, be liable to a misconstruction, I am sorry for it; but I bate no jot of the indignation which I then expressed. I think now, as I thought then, that this case, in the shape in which it was brought before the House of Commons, was a foul and wicked attempt to mislead and to inflame. To that statement I immoveably adhere.

Sir, I am not aware that there remains any other point upon which I have been required by any gentleman present to give a categorical answer.

My new antagonist, indeed, has touched upon a variety of general topics, into which I am not disposed to follow him; but he has addressed nothing personally to me, except some vague and, I do assure him, most exaggerated apprehensions of the treatment which he may expect at my hands. I have already assured you, Sir, that on the present occasion I had no intention of saying any thing: but even my silence was not safe from the scrutinizing jealousy of the worthy doctor; for, it seems, he discerned something in my looks, while the honourable colonel was speaking, which alarmed him for the colonel's safety and his own. I smiled. If I did so, I assure him it was a smile of complacency, or, perhaps, of amusement, but in no degree of contumely or evil intention. The honourable doctor, indeed, has tempted me somewhat high with his references to ancient history,—with his allusion to the conflagration of Rome, and to the Emperor Nero's musical accomplishments. Of that allusion I have not, to this moment, made out the application; but if he intended (which seems the most probable solution of it) to compare the honourable colonel's eloquence to a conflagration, and his own to a musical instrument, I have only to hope, that if I offended by smiling at the colonel's fire, I may have made atonement by looking grave at the doctor's fiddling.

My worthy antagonist will, I am sure, see how vain are all his apprehensions of any hostile aggression on my part. Attacked, indeed, I might possibly think it my duty to show him that raillery is a game which two can play at. But, even without the solemnity of the adjuration which he has addressed to me, as one in the habit of sparing nothing, either sacred or human, I assure him he has nothing to fear. I do not, indeed, know that there is any thing sacred about the doctor, but, as merely human, I shall be contented to abstain from him, so long as that abstinence is mutual. And I assure him most seriously, that if there is, as I trust there will not be, any want of courtesy and good-humour between us in the course of our competition, that deficiency shall not be first shown on my side.

Mr. Mayor and Gentlemen, I have nothing more to say to you, sorry only to have been placed under the necessity of wasting so much of your time.

I present myself to your choice on the grounds of those very principles, and of that very conduct, which have been imputed to me as blame by my accusers; and particularly as one who, in spite of all that we have heard to-day against statutes and legal establishments, venerates the statute as well as the common law of the land, and holds fast to the constitution as by law established.

SPEECH

AT THE CLOSE OF THE FIRST DAY'S POLL, THE 8TH OF
MARCH, 1820.

GENTLEMEN,

THE little voice that I have left to me from a very severe cold, and after a speech which has been this morning extorted from me on the hustings, I wish to employ in expressing my acknowledgments to you for this reception, overpowering to my feelings, and exceeding, as it does, even former expressions of your kindness.

Gentlemen, it so happens that in making my first address to you I have also to announce to you the result of the first day's poll. Mr. Leyland, 27; Dr. Crompton, 54; General Gascoyne, 149; myself, by your exertions, 161:—such are the stations in which the candidates respectively stand in the scale of popular favour.

Gentlemen, I wish to speak with all possible respect of any individual who, by however small a number of the freemen of Liverpool, is thought worthy of being put in competition with those whom you honour with your choice. Of Mr.

Leyland, therefore, who stands last on the poll, it is far from my intention to say any thing disparaging or disrespectful. But I have been told to-day, on the hustings, by a very eloquent gentleman,* that by some strong spell they have, as it were, evoked from the tomb the phantom whom, in 1816, you remember, it required so much exorcism to lay. It has even been boasted to-day, that this phantom will really appear, on this occasion, in the upper air, clothed with fleshly substance, and is to challenge your votes, not only as a shadow and a name, but as the living man who cast so long a shadow in 1816, and to whom the respectable name so much abused on that occasion belongs. I have only to express my hope that this is so. If such be his intention, Mr. Leyland will, I trust, present himself in person at the hustings to-morrow. But many a conjuror has found, that the spell which raises a ghost cannot always command it to do his bidding: and, if the spirit now conjured up is found to be of this refractory sort; if it shall thus defy the authority of those who boast to have raised it from the tomb, I trust that its disturbers will allow it to repose in peace, and content themselves with writing its epitaph.

The new candidate, Dr. Crompton, has conducted himself, in the course of this day, for

* Mr. Rushton.

aught that I have seen, with perfect civility and good-humour. And, if the present election is to resemble that of 1816, rather than either of the others in which I have had the honour to contend with worthy and substantial antagonists, I trust that the resemblance will be confined to that circumstance only; and that in every other respect we shall follow the example which did us,—which did Liverpool so much credit, and exhibited it as a model for other popular contests at the last general election. I am sure it is not necessary to say, in addressing such an audience as I now see before me, that abstinence from all asperity implies no relaxation of exertion. Confident in the issue of our cause, we have only to take care that our conduct throughout is worthy of it. We shall hazard nothing of our success, and we shall earn it more nobly, by setting the example now, as on former occasions, of forbearance, good temper, and good manners.

Gentlemen, as other occasions will occur on which I may be called upon to address you on subjects of deeper interest, I hope you will forgive me if, at this our first meeting, and in the state of exhaustion in which you all—or such of you as my voice reaches—must perceive me to be, I content myself with renewing my heart-felt acknowledgments for the affectionate demonstrations of good-will with which you have again received me; and with repeating once more the

assurance, so often repeated in my intercourse with my constituents, that by my public conduct and public principles alone I desire to be tried ; that I would now conjure you, in discharging the great duty which it now falls to you to discharge, to leave out of the question every feeling of personal preference ; and, if you approve not cordially the public man, to dismiss into private life the humble individual who addresses you.

SPEECH

AT THE CLOSE OF THE SECOND DAY'S POLL, THE 9TH OF
MARCH, 1820.

GENTLEMEN,

I LOSE not a moment in presenting myself before you, on account of the state of pressure in which I see you below ; and I hope you will not take it amiss, if the same reason, together with the remains of an indisposition under which you must perceive I labour, should shorten the address which I have to make to you this evening.

Gentlemen, to begin with stating to you the numbers of the poll: Mr. Leyland, still remaining

in the equivocal state in which I described him to you yesterday, neither wholly avowed, nor wholly withdrawn, has obtained suffrages of his fellow-townsmen to the amount of 69; Dr. Crompton, 129; General Gascoyne, 329; myself, by your usual partiality, the highest, 358.

Gentlemen, these numbers, satisfactory as they are in comparison, are in positive amount much less, I believe, than have usually been announced on the second day of a Liverpool election. It is incumbent on me to state to you the cause of this uncommon slowness in our progress. I would not state it yesterday, because I did not wish to qualify the testimony which I was desirous of bearing to the general conduct of our new opponent with any drawback; and especially with one which I did hope that his own reflection, and his respect for you, would, before the close of this day, have removed. Gentlemen, Dr. Crompton, eminent, as he declares himself, above all other candidates for the respect which he pays to popular freedom, and the reliance which he places on popular suffrage, has, nevertheless, thought proper to evince that respect and reliance, in the case of Liverpool, by tendering to every voter the oath disclaiming bribery. Gentlemen, if a stranger coming among you, and knowing you only by the reports of your enemies—I beg pardon, by the report of your friends, for it is the friends of the people that impute to

the people bribery and corruption;—if a stranger, I say, thus coming among you, had been so far misled as to think it necessary to propose this test of the purity of your votes, I do not say that he would be to be commended, but he might be forgiven. But that it should come from your own townsman;—from a man who has chosen his domicile among you;—who, having made repeated trial of popular elections in other towns of less note than Liverpool, has taken refuge in Liverpool, as a soil more favourable to his ambition;—that, having thus stamped on your name the sanction of his preference, and having lived among you so long in habits of familiarity and good neighbourhood—he should be the person to hold you out to the world as not to be trusted in the exercise of your franchise, without purging yourselves, individually, by an oath, from the foul stain of bribery;—this is, indeed, to me as utterly astonishing, as to his hopes of your support it must, I should think, be decisively fatal.

Gentlemen, in what I have said, I do not mean to cast any blame on Dr. Crompton. He has the law on his side, and to exact that which the law allows is not properly a subject of blame. But there may be a certain want of discretion, in pushing an unquestioned right to an invidious exercise; there may be a want of discernment, in applying the rigour of a law, passed to meet extreme cases of justifiable suspicion or of

recorded corruption, to a community like this, free, if any popular election ever was so, from imputations so affronting and degrading.

Gentlemen, the act, such as it is, is wholly the act of our opponent. I did not concur in it, and I would not retaliate it. To us, indeed, as to the issue of the contest, it is altogether indifferent, whether the pace at which it proceeds be accelerated or retarded. It is also indifferent to us, whether every one of our votes be prefaced with an assurance upon oath that it is unbought, or whether we derive that assurance from our knowledge of each other;—from the knowledge, that there is neither on the one side the disposition to corrupt, nor on the other the capacity of being corrupted. Let us, then, be contented to proceed in the course which it is in the discretion of our antagonist, by the persevering application of the power with which the law has armed him, to chalk out for us;—slower, indeed, than for your convenience I could wish, but, though slow, not the less sure: and let us be able, at the end of the contest, to do that which no man, I should think, could do with friends whom he had put to shame—to look each other in the face, with mutual congratulation, in the consciousness that our unsworn confidence in each other has not been misplaced nor disappointed.

SPEECH

AT THE CLOSE OF THE THIRD DAY'S POLL, THE 10TH OF
MARCH, 1820.

GENTLEMEN,

THE state of the poll, at the conclusion of this day, is as follows:—For Mr. Leyland, 82; for Dr. Crompton, 189; for General Gascoyne, 518; for myself, 559. We keep our respective proportions, Gentlemen; but I am sorry to say, that the progress of the election is such as bids fair, if the present system be persevered in, to consume the whole of the time which is allowed for it by the law.

I admitted yesterday, Gentlemen, that they who exact only what the law allows to them, do not thereby expose themselves to blame. It may be an exaggerated degree of respect for legal enactments that induces them to be extreme in such exaction. But they might do well to consider the difference between what is peremptory and what is permissive in such enactments; and to reflect whether the course which they are now pursuing tallies exactly with the sentiments which they profess to hold, and which they labour

to inspire into the people. The law permits the putting of the bribery oath to every voter; but, though the law is general, it was probably intended to operate only on cases where there was reasonable suspicion of corruption. When partially applied, it may be fairly presumed, that the application is not made without some ground for such suspicion; but when applied universally to a whole community, what wide-spreading distrust does it not show! what a deep taint of corruption does it not imply in the society visited with such an infliction! It is singular, that the ungraciousness of so sweeping a charge should not have occurred to persons whose course of reasoning upon other subjects of legislative interference seems naturally calculated to suggest it to them. Whenever the necessities of the times, arising from the machinations of evil men, have compelled Parliament to have recourse to restrictive measures, those persons who agree in politics with our antagonists have seldom failed to object, that, by passing such restrictive measures, Parliament cast a slur on the character of the whole nation. The answer to this objection has always been, that no such slur is cast on the national character; but that it is the duty of Parliament to protect the bulk of the nation against the evil designs of the few; that the law is, of necessity, general in its terms, but must, of right, be partial in its application. But with what face can they,

who hold the objection to which I have referred, refuse to be bound by their own reasoning? That they, therefore, of all men living, should be foremost to impose on the whole community in whose bosom they live, and whose favours they are courting, the disgraceful stigma provided by law for cases of gross suspicion, is a degree of inconsistency as well as of indiscretion which, unless I had witnessed it, I could not have believed.

Gentlemen, whatever may be the feelings which such conduct is calculated to excite, I trust, nevertheless, that, even under the unavoidable influence of those feelings, you will still persevere in the course which you have begun; will overcome the disgust which you must naturally experience, and which it was, perhaps, designed to create, at being compelled to preface your votes by a disclaimer so uncalled-for and so discreditable; and will show to those who impose so offensive a condition upon you, that, if they have not won you over to their side by their politics, they are not likely either to pique you by their discourteousness into any expression of resentment, or to frighten you from the exercise of your rights by the intimation of their unjustifiable suspicions.

Gentlemen, after to-morrow's poll, I am sorry to inform you, we are to lose, for a time, the benefit of the presence of our only palpable antagonist. Mr. Leyland will, of course, remain

in the same ostensible situation which he now fills to so much advantage: but Dr. Crompton takes his leave of us for a few days, to extend to the county at large the benefit of those practices which, he thinks, it would be too good for Liverpool to have concentrated upon itself. Careful, however, for your pastime, or apprehensive that you should too soon betake yourselves again to your usual occupations and habits of industry, though, in taking leave of the hustings, he takes leave of all hope of success, he means to leave occupation for you behind him. It is his intention that you should continue to poll at the two vacant bars. This seems, perhaps, a little unreasonable; for the candidate who thinks it right to call on you for your oaths, might, surely, afford you the opportunity of swearing to his face.

Gentlemen, I will not detain you longer at present. I wish you all a better night than, from the effect of the indisposition under which I still labour, I myself am likely to have; but, I trust, I shall have the pleasure of meeting you here, if not at the hustings, to-morrow.

SPEECH

AT THE CLOSE OF THE FOURTH DAY'S POLL, THE 11TH OF
MARCH, 1820.

GENTLEMEN,

I THANK you for this kind visit to a sick man; and I lament only that I can hardly expect to make my acknowledgments to you audible. I thank you particularly for the care which you have had the goodness to take of my son, whom, in my unavoidable absence, I deputed to represent me on the hustings. In my present inability to address you, I should be very glad to devolve upon him the task of offering his own thanks as well as mine : but he, Gentlemen, is of a profession much better than any of those whose business it is to make speeches—he is of the profession of Nelson; and I shall be better pleased, hereafter, that he should achieve actions which may be the subject of speeches, than that he should make them, how ably soever, himself.

Gentlemen, the poll, as it is reported to me to-day, stands thus. Commencing from the lowest, Mr. Leyland has 99 votes; Dr. Crompton, 234; General Gascoyne, 708; myself, 767. The total

number of freemen who have polled is 1,096; which, compared with 2,876, the amount of the total poll in 1818, and the largest, I believe, that has ever been known at a Liverpool election, shows that, even with all the obstruction which has been thrown in the way of our progress, more than one-third of our work is done.

Gentlemen, what possible advantage our antagonists can imagine they derive from a protraction which evidently has no reasonable object, it is not for me to conjecture. But I trust, that a few days more of a calm and steady perseverance on your part will prove to them, that whatever game they are playing, they are playing it in vain; that they may increase their unpopularity, but can never augment their numbers by it.

Gentlemen, it has sometimes occurred to me to consider, whether this mode of conducting an election can have been devised with the view of exhibiting a practical specimen of the benefits which would be imposed upon the country by that wild parliamentary reform which our antagonists are in the habit of recommending.

It will probably appear, if they persist at the rate at which they are now going, and at which they are, unfortunately, enabled to force us to go with them, that a contest hopeless from the beginning, and without the excuse, therefore, of expectations rationally entertained, and afterwards unexpectedly disappointed; without any

of those vicissitudes of success which raise alternately the spirits of either side, and tempt to continual exertion, may be so carried on as to absorb the full time allowed by the law for exhausting all the resources of conflicting parties, in the most vehement struggle of balanced interests.

Fifteen days of industry, fifteen days of business, fifteen days of that which, to a populous town, is invaluable,—the useful application of talents and of time, will have been lost to this community in a strife which, after all, is, from beginning to end, a mere sham fight, and which might have been ended in half an hour. Couple with this waste of fifteen days the project for making elections annual, and I would desire political arithmeticians to consider what would be the loss to this great commercial country, if such a system were established, and acted upon, as it is now against you, in every part of the United Kingdom.

Gentlemen, though in this town, more than in any other, the general opulence and prosperity of its inhabitants, the generosity of the wealthy, and the regular habits of the labouring classes, may make such a temporary suspension of business an evil of comparatively less fatal infliction, yet even to you it must be a matter of no light inconvenience, in its pressure and in its example. Let it be our satisfaction, that we have no share in

producing this unnecessary and prodigal waste of time. And, if we must lose our time, let us keep our temper, in the assurance that the period cannot be far distant, when a system of vexation, at once so feeble and so mischievous, must break down.

SPEECH

AT THE CLOSE OF THE FIFTH DAY'S POLL, THE 13TH OF
MARCH, 1820.

GENTLEMEN,

THE occurrences and the result of this day's poll have been somewhat more satisfactory than those of the days preceding. There has, also, been some novelty in the course of our proceedings. In the first place, Gentlemen, Mr. Leyland has appeared. In the second place, Gentlemen, he has disappeared. He has appeared as a voter, thereby disappearing as a candidate. He was, as I am credibly informed, visible above the horizon for near five minutes while he gave a plumper at the bar of General Gascoyne. Gentlemen, in that appearance and in that plumper he has, first of all, redeemed himself from a

situation of playing second fiddle to the first fiddle assumed to himself by Dr. Crompton; and he has left behind him an injunction to all his friends, as solemn as if it were written in his will, that, whomever else they vote for, they shall not vote for Dr. Crompton.

With respect to the second of our antagonists, I hardly know in what words to communicate to you what has befallen him. Gentlemen, we have lost our Crompton. He is not to be found in Liverpool to-day; but as, when the sun sinks into the west, it is a consolation to those who lose the benefit of his light (if they have any spark of generosity in their nature) to know that it is rising upon another hemisphere; so we, who can no longer bask in the beams of Dr. Crompton's countenance, have a benevolent satisfaction at learning, that it rose, through the window of the morning coach, this day upon the people of Lancaster.*

Gentlemen, why Dr. Crompton has betaken himself to Lancaster, it is not for those who are not in his councils to conjecture. We are told, indeed, by his friends, that it is not for the purpose of proposing himself as a candidate there;—that he is gone to propose some other gentleman. But, surely, Liverpool has a right to complain

* Dr. Crompton had proceeded to Lancaster, on this occasion, for the purpose of nominating his friend, Colonel Williams, one of the candidates for the honour of representing the county in Parliament.

even of such temporary dereliction. He is no very warm suitor who can leave the lady whose hand he is soliciting for himself, to plead with another fair one the cause of a friend, however dear to him. We are assured, however, that he is to return on Thursday from this suit by proxy, in the hope that Liverpool will forgive his little infidelity, and take the dear deceiver to her arms and her favour again.

Gentlemen, during Dr. Crompton's absence, his place is supplied by Colonel Williams; a man of whom I mean to say nothing not perfectly respectful; but of whom I must in truth say, that, since my arrival in this town, my ideas have become exceedingly confused. I thought him a professor of the most popular principles; I thought him an adorer of the power and the rights of the people. Judge, then, what must have been the surprise with which, on the first day of the election, I heard him publicly declare, on the hustings, his incapacity to canvas clubs and "squeeze the dirty palms of the freemen." Such, Gentlemen, was the declaration that I heard, with astonishment, on Wednesday last, from Colonel Williams; and judge what must be the surprise with which, after that declaration, I learn, that he has been squeezing the palms of Dr. Crompton's voters to-day.

Gentlemen, when I heard these words uttered by Colonel Williams, I could not help reflecting

what would have been the misconstruction—nay, I should rather say, what would have been the just indignation created among the freemen of Liverpool, if from any less popular friend of freedom they had heard a declaration of such a kind? I could not help considering with myself, if unfortunately I had been betrayed into an expression so offensively disrespectful—But no! that was impossible. I will not, or even for argument's sake, admit such a supposition. But what if I, in the middle of an election, had taken leave of the freemen of Liverpool, or had set out, without taking leave, to canvas for some one else, in some other part of the country;—what, I say, would, in that case, have been the declamation of Colonel Williams against me? How should I have been held up as treating you with contempt, as reckoning upon your suffrages without an effort to obtain them?

But, Gentlemen, the lesson which every sober man will draw from these, among other instances, is, that habitual protestations of extravagant, excessive popular feelings are to be received with a caution proportioned to their extravagance and excess. Distrust all such protestations. Be assured, that whatever is exaggerated in profession, whatever pretends to be peculiarly disinterested, or peculiarly devoted to the popular cause, is to be watched with peculiar caution; and that the chances are very great, that some

opportunity will arise, when temper or policy will betray the worthlessness of such professions and pretences.

Gentlemen, under the circumstances which I have described, more auspicious than those of preceding days, the progress of the poll has more nearly kept pace with our former experience and with our wishes. The numbers are:—For Mr. Leyland, 117; Dr. Crompton, 286; General Gascoyne, 954; for myself, 1,041. The total number of freemen who have polled is 1,453; being somewhat more than half the number of the year 1818, the greatest (as I stated to you on Saturday) that ever polled at a Liverpool election. I told you on that day, that one-third of our work was done: I may now congratulate you on having probably achieved more than one-half of it.

The same indisposition, though happily diminishing, which prevented me from attending at the hustings on Saturday, has kept me at home to-day; and I have again to thank you for having, with the same kindness, been pleased to accept the services of my son in my behalf. By the indulgence thus extended to me, I have little doubt of being able to meet you on the hustings to-morrow. But it is suggested to me, that, as the poll is now happily going on at an accelerated pace; as it is possible that two or three days may bring us to a conclusion; and as, during the absence of our only remaining opponent, nothing

of any very lively interest can occur, it may be convenient for all parties to dispense with our further meetings here until the close of the poll, looking forward to the meeting on that occasion as probably very near, and assuredly as most triumphant.

SPEECH

AT THE CANNING CLUB, ON WEDNESDAY, THE 15TH OF
MARCH, 1820.

GENTLEMEN,

AMONGST the sensations excited in my mind by the manner in which you have now done me the honour to receive me, there is but one that is not of the most pleasing kind. It is this—that in proportion as these demonstrations of good-will increase, I find it impossible to make my acknowledgments keep pace with them. This is the fourth time that I have come to Liverpool; it is the third time that I have had the honour of meeting this association, the offspring of our first victory, the promise and security of all that have followed or may follow it.

Gentlemen, this association has thus been both effect and cause. It was instituted to perpetuate the triumph of those principles of which I was selected by you as a not inefficient, though inadequate, representative. The continuance of your kindness, and the repetition of those triumphs, are a sufficient guarantee, that, so long as I am faithful to those principles, I shall be placed in a situation to vindicate and uphold them.

Gentlemen, the times when I first came amongst you were times portentous and awful, and big with the fate not only of England, but of the world. But the dangers and the difficulties of those times created in us an animating spirit, which nerved our arms and steeled our hearts to oppose and overcome them. The dangers and the difficulties of the present times are of a different character; and, whilst they threaten the existence of all that is dear to us, the struggle which we have to sustain is one in which there is not the same wholesome animation, because it is with antagonists who dare not face the day; and the victory, when achieved, is less void of exultation, because it is over those who ought never to have been other than our friends.

But, Gentlemen, it is against the same spirit, though exhibited in different forms, though wielding different weapons,—it is against the same spirit that we contended abroad for our own safety and that of Europe, and are contending

now for our political existence at home : a spirit then as now adverse to rational freedom ; a spirit then as now hostile to national tranquillity ; a spirit then as now seeking to subvert society itself, by separating the elements of which it is composed and setting them in array against each other ; and to undermine the foundation of man's happiness in this world, by destroying his hopes of an hereafter.

Were I to have my choice, I confess I would rather have to contend with this spirit embodied and armed—I would rather cross the sea to combat it, whether on the plains of the Peninsula, or on the field of Waterloo, than have to guard against it here, in the various disguises of affected philanthropy and fanatical reform in which it is to be found every day at our elbows and by our firesides.

There is, however, one consolation to be derived from the extreme degree of malignity to which this spirit has been lately exasperated. In the ordinary agitations and contests which disturb society, there is seldom any line which so distinctly marks the boundaries of opposite opinions and interests, as to make it quite impossible that stragglers from either class should be confounded with the other. In ordinary divisions, something must be allowed for hesitation and timidity, something for the possibility of mistake or delusion ; and neutrality is the refuge of those

who have not the leisure to examine or the firmness to decide. But things are now brought so plainly home to every man's understanding, that he who runs may read; and he who listens to the doctrines with which the constitution of the country is assailed; with which the majesty of the throne is insulted; by which the rights of all orders of the people are proposed to be sacrificed to an overwhelming despotism and a fierce and levelling anarchy;—he who can hear these things, and doubt whether there be a design among those who speak such language to pull down all authority, to subvert all institutions, and to confound the fair degrees by which a people are a nation, must either be altogether reckless of all that is passing around him, or indifferent about the preservation of blessings which he is unworthy to enjoy.

These are times which admit not of neutrality. When the most sacred institutions of the country are assailed with more than foreign enmity, he who is not for them is against them.

It has sometimes been doubted, whether associations of the sort which I have now the honour of addressing be or be not useful and praiseworthy. But of this there can be no doubt, that where bad men combine, the good must associate, if they mean to stand to their defence on equal terms.

What may be the bond of association signifies

little, provided only, that the principle of union be the defence of all that is sound in morality, of all that is solid in principle, of all that is a source of glory to us as Englishmen, and of hope as human kind. That such an association should be bound together by the name of any particular individual, must be to the individual whose name is so honoured matter of humility as well as of pride:—of humility, because he cannot but compare the greatness of the thing signified with the unworthiness of the symbol; of pride, that his name, all unworthy as it may be, should, by its association with such principles and with such an institution, be likely to survive his own existence.

Gentlemen, I understand you have, within these few days, added to your number another person bearing my name, a person so dear to myself, that his adoption into your society has been, in the highest degree, grateful to my feelings. Upon being shown the book in which my son's name has been enrolled, I perceive that, either from inadvertence or timidity, he has suppressed a part of his denomination. His name is William *Pitt* Canning. The illustrious person whose name he bears was his godfather. Gentlemen, the political principles which I inherit from the godfather, I shall endeavour to instil into my son, and through him I hope to transmit them to my latest posterity.

Gentlemen, I have only again to thank you for the unabated kindness with which you have received me this evening, and to assure you, that one of the greatest pleasures which I derive from visiting Liverpool is the pleasure of meeting you here assembled, and of expressing all the acknowledgments which I am peculiarly bounden to feel towards this society.

SPEECH

AT THE BACKBONE CLUB, ON WEDNESDAY, THE 15TH OF
MARCH, 1820.

GENTLEMEN,

My first duty as well as inclination is to express the gratitude which I feel for the manner in which you have done me the honour to receive me, not now for the first time, but at each of my successive visits to Liverpool. Gentlemen, my second duty, however, is to disclaim for myself personally any part of the compliments paid to me by your society, and to set them down to the account of those principles which we hold in

common, and which you first called upon me to defend.

Gentlemen, the period at which I first came among you was one in which the strife of political parties ran high: the same parties are now in violent conflict upon questions of domestic polity, importing nothing less than whether Englishmen shall maintain inviolate the happy and tempered monarchy, under which the country has so long flourished; or, whether they shall waste their strength in intestine commotions, provoked under the pretence of improving the constitution, but risking, in their consequences, its utter confusion and overthrow.

Gentlemen, the question which is put prominently forward, but which involves all the others, is that of a more strict and personal representation of the people. If I wanted an illustration of the species of representation which I have always thought and always contended to be sufficient for the purpose of the state, I would desire no better a one than that which this room affords me. You are here, Gentlemen comparatively few, when compared with the great body of which you are a part. But does it follow, Gentlemen, that because all the members of the Backbone Club are not here assembled in person; that because those who are here to-night have not been specially selected for this occasion by those who are absent;—does it follow, that the spirit, that

the sense of the Backbone Club are not fairly collected in this room; or that within this room, if any thing were proposed, any thing could be decided against its feelings and its interests? As completely do I believe the House of Commons to be identified in feelings and in interests with the great body of the people, and to represent them as carefully and effectually, as if there were no member of the House of Commons upon whom some portion of the community could not lay its finger, (as you, Gentlemen, can on me,) and say, "To the services of this man I have a specific and particular claim;" or, as if there were no individual in the community who could not thus point out the delegate of his own specific selection.

They who call for a more distinct and personal representation, do, in effect, mean nothing less than to let into the House of Commons, not the deliberate, collective sense of the nation, but the direct and daily influence of their temporary passions and prejudices; and to give a mastery over all its votes to those who would array against property and intelligence the physical strength of numbers.

Gentlemen, whatever may be the form of government; whatever the form of the social institutions under which they live, the bulk of mankind must gain their daily bread by their daily labour. To quarrel with this condition of man, is to quarrel,

not with the devices of man, but with the ordination of Providence. To transfer to those classes whose lot is necessarily cast in penury and toil the exclusive conduct of political affairs, or a direct and permanent control over them;—is there any one so visionary as not to understand, or so disingenuous as not to allow, that this would have no other effect than to delude the classes whom you pretended to benefit, to disturb the relations of life, and to throw society into confusion?

In the assembly now collected here, I see virtually represented the commercial wealth, and skill, and industry of Liverpool. It represents, in a peculiar degree, that most valuable part of the population, the middle classes of society, in which the staple interest as well as the staple good sense of the community reside. In times like the present, when the higher and the lower ranks of society are placed, by the contrivances of designing men, in a relation, I had almost said of enmity, but certainly of mutual watchfulness and jealousy towards each other;—the higher standing on an eminence which exposes every action and every word to a scrutinizing malignity of criticism such as human imperfection can scarcely bear; the lowest, labouring (it is but too true) under severe privation, and taught to ascribe their sufferings to causes which have no concern in producing them, and the removal of which

would not in any degree abate them;—the best chance of safety for the whole resides mainly in that body which is interposed between the two extremes. On the one hand, they have nothing to gain by confusion: on the other hand, the rights which they have to guard are of the least invidious nature. They are those to whom the high can look with most confidence for the preservation of a state of society in which they are as deeply interested as the proudest and wealthiest peer; and to whom the lower look up with confidence from the friendliness of daily intercourse, and from the necessity of mutual co-operation.

On you, therefore, Gentlemen, is peculiarly incumbent the duty, and you have happily, beyond all others, the means, of reconciling and keeping together the different divisions whose attitude is, apparently, the most adverse to each other, by steadily discountenancing principles which are aimed at the destruction of all alike. On the sober, just, and well-regulated conduct of the middle classes; on their attachment to the laws, to the constitution of their country; on their loyalty and zeal; on their example of a courteous but manly deference to what is above them, and of a firm but gentle and soothing demeanour to what is below them in the scale of society, rests, in a great measure, the hopes of safety to the state.

Of that most important and conservative portion of society, I repeat, I know not where I could look for a better specimen than I now see before me;—of these hopes I know not where I could find a surer asylum than in the place in which I now stand.

Accept, Gentlemen, once again, my warmest thanks for your kindness; and allow me to take leave of you with the best wishes for your health and happiness.

SPEECH

AT THE SAME CLUB, AFTER THE HEALTH OF “HIS MAJESTY’S
MINISTERS” HAD BEEN DRUNK.

GENTLEMEN,

THE acknowledgments which, a little while ago, I offered for myself, I now feel bound to offer on behalf of that body of which I am one. When I shall report to my colleagues the honour you have done them, they will, I am sure, be highly gratified with your unanimous approbation of their labours.

Gentlemen, in upholding the constitution which

they are sworn to administer, they do not deserve praise: they simply do their duty. So long as they receive from the country the cordial support which they have of late received;—so long as, in their endeavours to meet the dangers of the times, they are encouraged by the approbation of the loyal and the good, they will, in defiance of faction, and in spite of any interested misconstruction of their conduct, continue to do that duty to the best of their power: they will decline no unpopularity and shrink from no danger which may attend the conscientious discharge of it.

SPEECH

AFTER HAVING BEEN CHAIRED, THE 16TH OF MARCH, 1820.

GENTLEMEN,

UPON this, the fourth, occasion on which you have done me the honour to return me as your representative to Parliament, conferring upon me thereby the highest honour and the dearest trust which any body of men can confer upon an individual, I can only return the same acknowledgments, in nearly the same terms which I have

employed thrice before. Sentiments, in their nature invariable, could only lose their force by any attempt at variety in the expression of them. I most cordially thank you for this new proof of your confidence and kindness.

Gentlemen, although the victory which has this time been achieved hardly deserves that name, and certainly did not appear to me to merit the splendour of the triumph with which it has been this day celebrated, I yielded my own individual judgment, in that respect, to the consideration, that, in such a celebration, there is nothing of a personal triumph. In following the chair in which I have been borne, and accompanying its progress with the expressions of your exultation and good-will, I well know that it was not to the individual, but to your own principles, embodied and represented in him, that you rendered a voluntary homage.

Gentlemen, the elections in which I have had the honour to be chosen by you are of two distinct characters. In the first and in the third of them, you had real and vigorous combats to sustain; you had to repel the attempt to impose upon you representatives, the choice of whom would have inferred a change in political sentiments, and an abandonment of constitutional principles. In that of 1816, and in that of the present day, your object has been not so much to repel any such serious danger, as to maintain, with a

high hand, the ascendancy which you already enjoyed.

On the present occasion, indeed, the presumption of your antagonists appears to have been equalled only by the weakness with which they came into the field: and in proportion as their means of success were diminished, they seem to have aimed at the achievement of greater objects. Whether it was that they imagined their principles of reform to have made greater progress in Liverpool than in any other part of the country, I cannot say. But it was surely no small presumption, especially on the part of those who are continually declaiming against the undue interference of powerful individuals, and against the servile surrender of the freedom of election;—it was no small presumption, I say, for any such party to think, that they might, with one hand, grasp the representation of Liverpool, and, with the other, indicate the representative of the county.

Gentlemen, the process by which this twofold operation was to be brought about was one of a curious kind. It reminds me of what I have read, in some of the political pamphlets of, I believe, the reign of Queen Anne, of an empiric who, not liking to sound his own praises, but wishing to have them sounded, hit upon a notable expedient of obtaining the benefit, without incurring the reproach of such a proclamation. A youth

preceded him in the crowd, crying, with a loud voice, "My father cures all sorts of diseases." The doctor marched behind him, with a sedate and solemn step, simply declaring, "The youth says true." Now, Colonel Williams appears to have acted, on our hustings, the part of the ingenuous youth, when he proposed Dr. Crompton to you as a healer of all the diseases of the political constitution. Dr. Crompton followed, with a modest and measured pace, not singing his own praises, but admitting the truth of the praises which had been sung.

But one good turn deserves another; and the operation in hand was, as I have described it, twofold. The peculiar inducement held out to you to receive Dr. Crompton as your representative was, that he was in possession of some great specific, which would enable him to restore peace to the community, and to heal the differences by which the nation is unfortunately distracted. What this panacea was we could never extract from the Doctor on the hustings. Thus much only we could learn, that it was some cabalistic name which he was to pronounce on the hustings at Lancaster, which would still the popular storm, and diffuse liberty and contentment throughout the country. Well, when the time arrived, and Dr. Crompton departed for Lancaster, we found, that the scene, exhibited a few days before at Liverpool, was to be acted over again at the

county town, with a change only in the order of the *dramatis personæ*. Dr. Crompton was now to be the herald of the praises of his proposer; and the name of Williams, pronounced in the shire-hall, was the charm by which the county was to be lulled into peace and exalted into glory. Colonel Williams's election for the county was the prescription by which all diseases were to be healed. Pity that the county should reject the dose! but natural enough that, after that rejection, you should, upon his return to you, dismiss the Doctor!

Gentlemen, this, though a ludicrous proceeding enough, is, after all, but a fair specimen of that easy confidence with which those who preach the doctrines of indefinite reform already look on their triumph as secure, and count on the people of England as their prey. In a town containing thousands of freemen and tens of thousands of inhabitants; in a county containing tens of thousands of freeholders and hundreds of thousands of inhabitants,—is it not almost incredible to any person, not a radical reformer, that two men (however individually respectable) without either that station, that property, or that influence, natural or acquired, which could give authority to their recommendation among a vestry of their fellow-citizens, should have cherished the preposterous design of reciprocally

complimenting each other into the representation of the county and of the town?

I have said, Gentlemen, this was only a specimen, and no unfair one, of the confidence with which, if not now, some short four months ago, persons professing principles such as are professed by those two worthy brother candidates, each, in his turn, the other's nominator and nominee, reckoned on this fair land of England as at their feet, and almost in their clutches. Nor did they reason far amiss; for, depend upon it, if ever their schemes of unlimited suffrage and annual elections should find that favour in the eyes of the nation, which the misled and inflamed judgment of a part—a small part, I trust—of the nation appeared ready to bestow upon them, the progress would not be long, through the storms of popular commotion, to that state of things to which popular commotions always tend, and in which they are finally merged and extinguished—the arbitrary dictatorship of unfit and overweening individuals. These sagacious enthusiasts may, in their sanguineness, have a little anticipated the time,—they may have a little shortened the course by which such results would be arrived at from such beginnings: but let the day come when a change in the constitution of Parliament, upon the principles of the reformers, shall be effected, and the day will not be far off when

England may resign—I will not say to a Williams or a Crompton, but to some name quite as fitted to the station—the supreme direction of her destinies. This, Gentlemen, is not the language of theory ; it is the doctrine of experience. The history of your own country is sufficient to teach it to you, without looking abroad for more pregnant and still more terrible examples.

Gentlemen, under one or other of the classes into which I have divided our past elections every future contest will necessarily fall. It will arise either from the attempt of your antagonists to impose upon you a choice implying the adoption of principles which you disclaim ; or from the attempt, equally unsuccessful, I trust, to deter you from giving effect, by such a choice as you have this day made, to the principles which you cherish and approve. In the one case you will have, as in 1812 and 1818, occasion for all your resources of activity and zeal ; in the other, for all your firmness and perseverance.

Meantime, and to prepare you for these meditated attacks, you will hear daily enough of all that is amiss in the state. Hear, and judge : but before you decide, weigh well the characters and qualifications of those who preach changes to you, and who recommend themselves as the persons to operate them ; and weigh well what it is you have to give up as the price of those blessed innovations.

Recently emerged from a complicated and exhausting, though most glorious as well as necessary war, which occupied all our attention and engrossed all our anxiety, our commerce is, by slow degrees, regaining those channels from which war had diverted it, but in which, I trust, it will, ere long, flow as abundantly as ever. The public mind is not yet recovered from the agitation of mighty transactions and revolutions, nor settled down to the calm pursuits of peace. In this state of things, it is peculiarly our duty and our interest to consider how we shall most securely retain and improve the practical advantages which we enjoy, rather than to go to sea on a wild adventure in search of more perfect theories of human society and government, at the risk of all the untold evils to which that search is exposed. If we can but preserve unimpaired the blessings which the British constitution has hitherto imparted to successive generations; if we can be but contented to uphold the institutions which our forefathers have bequeathed to us, we shall have nothing to reproach to ourselves, and nothing to envy in any other nation of the world.

Gentlemen, these are your principles and they are mine. To assume that, in replacing me in the situation in which I stand, you have marked your partiality to an individual, would be to take a narrow and selfish view of the issue of this

contest. You have replaced me there in proof that your own principles are unchanged ; and that you believe me to continue faithful and firm to the principles which first recommended me to your notice.

SPEECH

AT THE PUBLIC DINNER IN HONOUR OF HIS RE-ELECTION,
IN THE MUSIC-HALL, ON SATURDAY, MARCH 18, 1820.

GENTLEMEN,

SHORT as the interval is since I last met you in this place on a similar occasion, the events which have filled up that interval have not been unimportant. The great moral disease which we then talked of as gaining ground on the community has, since that period, arrived at its most extravagant height; and, since that period also, remedies have been applied to it, if not of permanent cure, at least of temporary mitigation.

Gentlemen, with respect to those remedies,—I mean with respect to the transactions of the last short session of Parliament previous to the dissolution, I feel that it is my duty, as your

representative, to render to you some account of the part which I took in that assembly to which you sent me ; I feel it my duty also, as a member of the Government by which those measures were advised. Upon occasions of such trying exigency as those which we have lately experienced, I hold it to be of the very essence of our free and popular constitution, that an unreserved interchange of sentiment should take place between the representative and his constituents ; and if it accidentally happens, that he who addresses you as your representative, stands also in the situation of a responsible adviser of the Crown, I recognise in that more rare occurrence a not less striking or less valuable peculiarity of that constitution under which we have the happiness to live, —by which a Minister of the Crown is brought into contact with the great body of the community ; and the service of the King is shown to be a part of the service of the people.

Gentlemen, it has been one advantage of the transactions of the last session of Parliament, that while they were addressed to meet the evils which had grown out of charges heaped upon the House of Commons, they have also, in a great measure, falsified the charges themselves.

I would appeal to the recollection of every man who now hears me,—of any, the most careless estimator of public sentiment, or the most indifferent spectator of public events, whether any

country, in any two epochs, however distant, of its history, ever presented such a contrast with itself as this country in November, 1819, and this country in February, 1820? What was the situation of the country in November, 1819? Do I exaggerate when I say, that there was not a man of property who did not tremble for his possessions?—that there was not a man of retired and peaceable habits who did not tremble for the tranquillity and security of his home?—that there was not a man of orderly and religious principles who did not fear that those principles were about to be cut from under the feet of succeeding generations? Was there any man who did not apprehend the Crown to be in danger? Was there any man, attached to the other branches of the constitution, who did not contemplate with anxiety and dismay the rapid and, apparently, irresistible diffusion of doctrines hostile to the very existence of Parliament as at present constituted, and calculated to excite, not hatred and contempt merely, but open and audacious force, especially against the House of Commons?—What is, in these respects, the situation of the country now? Is there a man of property who does not feel the tenure by which he holds his possessions to have been strengthened? Is there a man of peace who does not feel his domestic tranquillity to have been secured? Is there a man of moral and religious principles who does not look forward

with better hope to see his children educated in those principles?—who does not hail, with renewed confidence, the revival and re-establishment of that moral and religious sense which had been attempted to be obliterated from the hearts of mankind?

Well, Gentlemen, and what has intervened between the two periods? A calling of that degraded Parliament; a meeting of that scoffed-at and derided House of Commons; a concurrence of those three branches of an imperfect constitution, not one of which, if we are to believe the radical reformers, lived in the hearts, or swayed the feelings, or commanded the respect of the nation; but which, despised as they were while in a state of separation and inaction, did, by a co-operation of four short weeks, restore order, confidence, a reverence for the laws, and a just sense of their own legitimate authority.

Another event, indeed, has intervened, in itself of a most painful nature, but powerful in aiding and confirming the impressions which the assembling and the proceedings of Parliament were calculated to produce. I mean the loss which the nation has sustained by the death of a Sovereign, with whose person all that is venerable in monarchy has been identified in the eyes of successive generations of his subjects; a Sovereign whose goodness, whose years, whose sorrows and sufferings, must have softened the

hearts of the most ferocious enemies of kingly power ; whose active virtues, and the memory of whose virtues, when it pleased Divine Providence that they should be active no more, have been the guide and guardian of his people through many a weary and many a stormy pilgrimage ; scarce less a guide, and quite as much a guardian, in the cloud of his evening darkness, as in the brightness of his meridian day.

That such a loss, and the recollections and reflections naturally arising from it, must have had a tendency to revive and refresh the attachment to monarchy, and to root that attachment deeper in the hearts of the people, might easily be shown by reasoning ; but a feeling truer than all reasoning anticipates the result, and renders the process of argument unnecessary. So far, therefore, has this great calamity brought with it its own compensation, and conspired to the restoration of peace throughout the country with the measures adopted by Parliament.

And, Gentlemen, what was the character of those measures ?—The best eulogy of them I take to be this : it may be said of them, as has been said of some of the most consummate productions of literary art, that, though no man beforehand had exactly anticipated the scope and the details of them, no man, when they were laid before him, did not feel that they were precisely such as he would himself have suggested. So faithfully

adapted to the case which they were framed to meet, so correctly adjusted to the degree and nature of the mischief they were intended to control, that, while we all feel that they have done their work, I think none will say there has been any thing in them of excess or supererogation.

We were loudly assured by the reformers, that the test, throughout the country, by which those who were ambitious of seats in the new Parliament would be tried was to be—whether they had supported those measures. I have inquired, with as much diligence as was compatible with my duties here, after the proceedings of other elections; and I protest I know no place yet, besides the hustings of Westminster and Southwark, at which that menaced test has been put to any candidates. To me, indeed, it was not put as a test, but objected as a charge. You know how that charge was answered: and the result is to me a majority of 1,300 out of 2,000 voters upon the poll.

But, Gentlemen, though this question has not, as was threatened, been the watchword of popular elections, every other effort has, nevertheless, been industriously employed to persuade the people, that their liberties have been essentially abridged by the regulation of popular meetings. Against that one of the measures passed by Parliament it is that the attacks of the radical

reformers have been particularly directed. Gentlemen, the first answer to this averment is, that the act leaves untouched all the constitutional modes of assembly which have been known to the nation since it became free. We are fond of dating our freedom from the Revolution. I should be glad to know, in what period since the Revolution, (up to a very late period indeed, which I will specify,)—in what period of those reigns growing out of the Revolution—I mean, of the first reigns of the House of Brunswick—did it enter into the head of man, that such meetings could be holden, or that the legislature would tolerate the holding of such meetings, as disgraced this kingdom for some months previous to the last session of Parliament? When, therefore, it is asserted, that such meetings were never before suppressed, the simple answer is,—they were never before systematically attempted to be holden.

I verily believe, the first meeting of the kind that was ever attempted and tolerated (I know of none anterior to it) was that called by Lord George Gordon, in St. George's-fields, in the year 1780, which led to the demolition of chapels and dwelling-houses, the breaking of prisons, and the conflagration of London. Was England never free till 1780? Did British liberty spring to light from the ashes of the metropolis? What! was there no freedom in the reign of George the Second? None in that of George the First?

None in the reign of Queen Anne or of King William? Beyond the Revolution I will not go. But I have always heard, that British liberty was established long before the commencement of the late reign; nay, that in the late reign (according to popular politicians) it rather sunk and retrograded: and yet never till that reign was such an abuse of popular meetings dreamt of, much less erected into a right, not to be questioned by magistrates, and not to be controlled by Parliament.

Do I deny, then, the general right of the people to meet, to petition, or to deliberate upon their grievances? God forbid! But social right is not a simple, abstract, positive, unqualified term. Rights are, in the same individual, to be compared with his duties; and rights in one person are to be balanced with the rights of others. Let us take this right of meeting in its most extended construction and most absolute sense. The persons who called the meeting at Manchester tell you, that they had a right to collect together countless multitudes to discuss the question of parliamentary reform: to collect them when they would and where they would, without consent of magistrates, or concurrence of inhabitants, or reference to the comfort or convenience of the neighbourhood. May not the peaceable, the industrious inhabitant of Manchester say, on the other hand, "I have a right

“ to quiet in my house ; I have a right to carry on
 “ my manufactory, on which not my existence
 “ only and that of my children, but that of my
 “ workmen and their numerous families depends.
 “ I have a right to be protected in the exercise
 “ of this my lawful calling. I have a right to be
 “ protected, not against violence and plunder
 “ only, against fire and sword, but against the
 “ terror of these calamities, and against the risk of
 “ these inflictions ; against the intimidation or se-
 “ duction of my workmen ; or against the distrac-
 “ tion of that attention and the interruption of that
 “ industry, without which neither they nor I can
 “ gain our livelihood. I call upon the laws to
 “ afford me that protection ; and, if the laws in
 “ this country cannot afford it, depend upon it, I
 “ and my manufactures must emigrate to some
 “ country where they can.” Here is a conflict
 of rights, between which what is the decision ?
 Which of the two claims is to give way ? Can
 any reasonable being doubt ? Can any honest
 man hesitate ? Let private justice or public ex-
 pediency decide, and can the decision by possi-
 bility be other, than that the peaceable and in-
 dustrious shall be protected,—the turbulent and
 mischievous put down ?

But what similarity is there between tumults
 such as these and an orderly meeting, recognised
 by the law for all legitimate purposes of discus-
 sion or petition ? God forbid, that there should

not be modes of assembly by which every class of this great nation may be brought together to deliberate on any matters connected with their interest and their freedom. It is, however, an inversion of the natural order of things, it is a disturbance of the settled course of society, to represent discussion as every thing, and the ordinary occupations of life as nothing. To protect the peaceable in their ordinary occupations is as much the province of the laws, as to provide opportunities of discussion for every purpose to which it is necessary and properly applicable. The laws do both: but it is no part of the contrivance of the laws, that immense multitudes should wantonly be brought together, month after month, and day after day, in places where the very bringing together of a multitude is of itself the source of terror and of danger.

It is no part of the provision of the laws, nor is it in the spirit of them, that such multitudes should be brought together at the will of unauthorized and irresponsible individuals, changing the scene of meeting as may suit their caprice or convenience, and fixing it where they have neither property, nor domicile, nor connexion. The spirit of the law goes directly the other way. It is, if I may so express myself, eminently a spirit of corporation. Counties, parishes, townships, guilds, professions, trades, and callings form so many local and political subdivisions, into which

the people of England are distributed by the law : and the pervading principle of the whole is that of vicinage or neighbourhood ; by which each man is held to act under the view of his neighbours ; to lend his aid to them, to borrow theirs ; to share their councils, their duties, and their burdens ; and to bear with them his share of responsibility for the acts of any of the members of the community of which he forms a part.

Observe, I am not speaking here of the reviled and discredited statute law only, but of that venerable common law to which our reformers are so fond of appealing on all occasions, against the statute law by which it is modified, explained, or enforced. Guided by the spirit of the one, no less than by the letter of the other, what man is there in this country who cannot point to the portion of society to which he belongs ? If injury is sustained, upon whom is the injured person expressly entitled to come for redress ? Upon the hundred, or the division in which he has sustained the injury. On what principle ? On the principle, that as the individual is amenable to the division of the community to which he specially belongs, so neighbours are answerable for each other. Just laws, to be sure, and admirable equity, if a stranger is to collect a mob which is to set half Manchester on fire ; and the burnt half is to come upon the other half for indemnity, while the stranger goes off,

unquestioned, to excite the like tumult and produce the like danger elsewhere !

That such was the nature, such the tendency, nay, that such, in all human probability, might have been the result of meetings like that of the 16th of August, who can deny ? Who that weighs all the particulars of that day, comparing them with the rumours and the threats that preceded it, will dispute that such might have been the result of that very meeting, if that meeting, so very legally assembled, had not, by the happy decision of the magistrates, been so very illegally dispersed ?

It is, therefore, not in consonance, but in contradiction to the spirit of the law, that such meetings have been holden. The law prescribes a corporate character. The callers of these meetings have always studiously avoided it. No summons of freeholders—none of freemen—none of the inhabitants of particular places or parishes—no acknowledgment of local or political classification. Just so at the beginning of the French Revolution : the first work of the reformers was to loosen every established political relation, every legal holding of man to man ; to destroy every corporation, to dissolve every subsisting class of society, and to reduce the nation into individuals, in order, afterwards, to congregate them into mobs.

Let no person, therefore, run away with the

notion, that these things were done without design. To bring together the inhabitants of a particular division, or men sharing a common franchise, is to bring together an assembly, of which the component parts act with some respect and awe of each other. Ancient habits, which the reformers would call prejudices; preconceived attachments, which they would call corruption; that mutual respect which makes the eye of a neighbour a security for each man's good conduct, but which the reformers would stigmatize as a confederacy among the few for dominion over their fellows:—all these things make men difficult to be moved, on the sudden, to any extravagant and violent enterprise. But bring together a multitude of individuals, having no permanent relation to each other,—no common tie, but what arises from their concurrence as members of that meeting, a tie dissolved as soon as the meeting is at an end;—in such an aggregation of individuals there is no such mutual respect, no such check upon the proceedings of each man from the awe of his neighbour's disapprobation; and, if ever a multitudinous assembly can be wrought up to purposes of mischief, it will be an assembly so composed.

How monstrous is it to confound such meetings with the genuine and recognised modes of collecting the sense of the English people! Was it by meetings such as these that the Revolution

was brought about, that grand event, to which our antagonists are so fond of referring? Was it by meetings in St. George's-fields? in Spafields? in Smithfield? Was it by untold multitudes collected in a village in the north? No! It was by the meeting of corporations, in their corporate capacity;—by the assembly of recognised bodies of the state;—by the interchange of opinions among portions of the community known to each other, and capable of estimating each other's views and characters. Do we want a more striking mode of remedying grievances than this? Do we require a more animating example? And did it remain for the reformers of the present day to strike out the course by which alone Great Britain could make and keep herself free?

Gentlemen, all power is, or ought to be, accompanied by responsibility. Tyranny is irresponsible power. This definition is equally true, whether the power be lodged in one or many;—whether in a despot, exempted by the form of government from the control of law; or in a mob, whose numbers put them beyond the reach of law. Idle, therefore, and absurd, to talk of freedom where a mob domineers! Idle, therefore, and absurd, to talk of liberty, when you hold your property, perhaps your life, not indeed at the nod of a despot, but at the will of an inflamed, an infuriated populace! If therefore, during the reign of terror at Manchester or at

Spafields, there were persons in this country who had a right to complain of tyranny, it was they who loved the constitution, who loved the monarchy, but who dared not utter their opinions or their wishes until their houses were barricaded, and their children sent to a place of safety. That was tyranny! and, so far as the mobs were under the control of a leader, that was despotism! It was against that tyranny, it was against that despotism, that Parliament at length raised its arm.

All power, I say, is vicious that is not accompanied by proportionate responsibility. Personal responsibility prevents the abuse of individual power: responsibility of character is the security against the abuse of collective power, when exercised by bodies of men whose existence is permanent and defined. But strip such bodies of these qualities, you degrade them into multitudes, and then what security have you against any thing that they may do or resolve, knowing that, from the moment at which the meeting is at an end, there is no human being responsible for their proceedings? The meeting at Manchester, the meeting at Birmingham, the meeting at Spafields or Smithfield, what pledge could they give to the nation of the soundness or sincerity of their designs? The local character of Manchester, the local character of Birmingham was not pledged to any of the proceedings to which

their names were appended. A certain number of ambulatory tribunes of the people, self-elected to that high function, assumed the name and authority of whatever place they thought proper to select for a place of meeting; their rostrum was pitched, sometimes here, sometimes there, according to the fancy of the mob, or the patience of the magistrates; but the proposition and the proposer were in all places nearly alike; and when, by a sort of political ventriloquism, the same voice had been made to issue from half-a-dozen different corners of the country, it was impudently assumed to be a concord of sweet sounds, composing the united voice of the people of England!

Now, Gentlemen, let us estimate the mighty mischief that has been done to liberty by putting down meetings such as I have described. Let us ask, what lawful authority has been curtailed; let us ask, what respectable community has been defrauded of its franchise; let us ask, what municipal institutions have been violated by a law which fixes the migratory complaint to the spot whence it professes to originate, and desires to hear of the grievance from those by whom that grievance is felt;—which leaves to Manchester, as Manchester, to Birmingham, as Birmingham, to London, as London, all the free scope of utterance which they have at any time enjoyed for making known their wants, their feelings, their

wishes, their remonstrances ;—which leaves to each of these divisions its separate authority,—to the union of all or of many of them the aggregate authority of such a consent and co-operation ; but which denies to an itinerant hawker of grievances the power of stamping their names upon his wares ;—of pretending, because he may raise an outcry *at* Manchester or *at* Birmingham, that he therefore speaks the sense of the town which he disquiets and endangers ; or, still more preposterously, that because he has disquieted and endangered half-a-dozen neighbourhoods in their turn, he is, therefore, the organ of them all, and, through them, of the whole British people.

Such are the stupid fallacies which the law of the last session has extinguished ! and such are the object and effect of the measures which British liberty is not to survive !

To remedy the dreadful wound thus inflicted upon British liberty,—to restore to the people what the people have not lost,—to give a new impulse to that spirit of freedom which nothing has been done to embarrass or restrain, we are invited to alter the constitution of that assembly through which the people share in the legislature ; in short, to make a radical reform in the House of Commons.

It has always struck me as extraordinary, that there should be persons prepared to entertain the

question of a change in so important a member of the constitution, without considering in what way that change must affect the situation of the other members, and the action of the constitution itself.

I have, on former occasions, stated here, and I have stated elsewhere, questions on this subject; to which, as yet, I have never received an answer. “ You who propose to reform the House of Commons, do you mean to restore that branch of the legislature to the same state in which it stood at some former period? or, do you mean to re-construct it on new principles?”

Perhaps a moderate reformer or whig will answer, that he means only to restore the House of Commons to what it was at some former period. I then beg to ask him,—and to that question, also, I have never yet received an answer,—“ At what period of our history was the House of Commons in the state to which you wish to restore it?”

The House of Commons must, for the purpose of clear argument, be considered in two views. First, with respect to its agency as a third part in the constitution: secondly, with respect to its composition, in relation to its constituents. As to its agency as a part of the constitution, I venture to say, without hazard, as I believe, of contradiction, that there is no period in the history of this country in which the House of Commons will be found

to have occupied so large a share of the functions of government as at present. Whatever else may be said of the House of Commons, this one point, at least, is indisputable, that, from the earliest infancy of the constitution, the power of the House of Commons has been growing, till it has almost, like the rod of Aaron, absorbed its fellows. I am not saying whether this is or is not as it ought to be. I am merely saying why I think that it cannot be intended to complain of the want of power, and of a due share in the government, as the defect of the modern House of Commons.

I admit, however, very willingly, that the greater share of power the House of Commons exercises, the more jealous we ought to be of its composition: and I presume, therefore, that it is in this respect, and in relation to its constituents, that the state of that house is contended to want revision. Well, then, at what period of our history was the composition of the House of Commons materially different from what it is at present? Is there any period of our history in which the rights of election were not as various, in which the influence of property was not as direct, in which recommendations of candidates were not as efficient, and some boroughs as close as they are now? I ask for information: but that information, plain and simple as it is, and necessary, one should think, to a clear understanding, much

more to a grave decision of the point at issue, I never, though soliciting it with all humility, have ever yet been able to obtain from any reformer, radical or whig.

The radical reformer, indeed, to do him justice, is not bound to furnish me with an answer to this question, because with *his* view of the matter precedents (except one, which I shall mention presently) have nothing to do. The radical reformer would, probably, give to my first question an answer very different from that which I have supposed his moderate brother to give. He will tell me fairly, that he means not simply to bring the House of Commons back, either to the share of power which it formerly enjoyed, or to the modes of election by which it was formerly chosen; but to make it what, according to him, it ought to be,—a direct, effectual representative of the people; representing them not as a delegate commissioned to take care of their interests, but as a deputy appointed to speak their will. Now to this view of the matter I have no other objection than this:—that the British constitution is a limited monarchy; that a limited monarchy is, in the nature of things, a mixed government; but that such a House of Commons as the radical reformer requires would, in effect, constitute a pure democracy; a power, as it appears to me, inconsistent with any monarchy, and unsusceptible of any limitation.

I may have great respect for the person who theoretically prefers a republic to a monarchy. But, even supposing me to agree with him in his preference, I should have a preliminary question to discuss, by which he, perhaps, may not feel himself embarrassed;—which is this, whether I, born as I am (and as *I* think it is my good fortune to be) under a monarchy, am quite at liberty to consider myself as having a clear stage for political experiments; whether I should be authorized, if I were convinced of the expediency of such a change, to withdraw monarchy altogether from the British constitution, and to substitute an unqualified democracy in its stead: or whether, whatever changes I may be desirous of introducing, I am not bound to consider the constitution which I find as at least circumscribing the range, and, in some measure, prescribing the nature, of the improvement.

For my own part, I am, undoubtedly, prepared to uphold the ancient monarchy of the country, by arguments drawn from what I think the blessings which we have enjoyed under it; and by arguments of another sort, if arguments of another sort shall ever be brought against it. But all that I am now contending for is, that whatever reformation is proposed, should be considered with some reference to the established constitution of the country. That point being conceded to me, I have no difficulty in saying, that I cannot

conceive a constitution of which one-third part shall be an assembly delegated by the people,—not to consult for the good of the nation, but to speak, day by day, the people's will,—which must not, in a few days' sitting, sweep away every other branch of the constitution that might attempt to oppose or control it. I cannot conceive how, in fair reasoning, any other branch of the constitution should pretend to stand against it. If government be a matter of will, all that we have to do is to collect the will of the nation, and, having collected it by an adequate organ, that will is paramount and supreme. By what pretension could the House of Lords be maintained in equal authority and jurisdiction with the House of Commons, when once that House of Commons should become a direct deputation, speaking the people's will, and that will the rule of the government? In one way or other the House of Lords must act, if it be to remain a concurrent branch of the legislature. Either it must uniformly affirm the measures which come from the House of Commons, or it must, occasionally, take the liberty to reject them. If it uniformly affirm, it is without the shadow of authority. But to presume to reject an act of the deputies of the whole nation!—by what assumption of right could three or four hundred great proprietors set themselves against the national will? Grant the reformers, then, what

they ask, on the principles on which they ask it, and it is utterly impossible that, after such a reform, the constitution should long consist of more than one body, and that one body a popular assembly.

Why, Gentlemen, is this theory? or is it a theory of mine? If there be, among those who hear me, any man who has been (as in the generous enthusiasm of youth any man may blamelessly have been) bitten by the doctrines of reform, I implore him, before he goes forward in his progress to embrace those doctrines in their radical extent, to turn to the history of the transactions in this country, in the year 1648, and to examine the bearings of those transactions on this very question of radical reform. He will find, Gentlemen, that the House of Commons of that day passed the following resolution:

“ Resolved, that the people are, under God,
“ the original of all just power.”

Well!—can any sentiment be more just and reasonable? Is it not the foundation of all the liberties of mankind? Be it so. Let us proceed. The House of Commons followed up this resolution by a second, which runs in something like these terms:

“ Resolved, That the Commons of England,
“ assembled in Parliament, being chosen by and
“ representing the people, *have the supreme autho-*
“ *rity* of this nation.”

In this resolution the leap is taken. Do the radical reformers deny the premises or the inference? or do they adopt the whole of the tempting precedent before them?

But the inference did not stop there. The House of Commons proceeded to deduce, from these propositions, an inference, the apparently logical dependance of which upon these propositions I wish I could see logically disproved.

“Resolved, (without one dissenting voice,) “That whatsoever is enacted and declared law “by the Commons of England, assembled in “Parliament, hath the force of law, and all the “people of this nation are included thereby, “*although the consent and concurrence of the “King and House of Peers be not had there- “unto.*”

Such was the theory: the practical inferences were not tardy in their arrival, after the theory. In a few weeks the House of Peers* was voted useless. We all know what became of the Crown.

Such, I say, were the radical doctrines of 1648, and such the consequences to which they naturally led. If we are induced to admit the same

* “The same day (January 30, 1648-9) the Lords desired a conference “with the Commons about settling the government, and the administration “of justice, the judges’ commissions being determined by the death of “the King. The Commons, without answering the messenger, voted the “Lords to be useless and dangerous, and, therefore, to be abolished.”—*Rapin, fo. vol. ii. p. 574.*

premises now, who is it, I should be glad to know, that is to guarantee us against similar conclusions?

These, then, are the reasons why I look with jealousy at schemes of parliamentary reform. I look at them with still more jealousy, because, in one of the two classes of men who co-operate in support of that question, I never yet found any two individuals who held the same doctrines; I never yet heard any intelligible theory of reform, except that of the radical reformers. Theirs, indeed, it is easy enough to understand. But as for theirs I certainly am not yet fully prepared. I, for my part, will not consent to take one step, without knowing on what principle I am invited to take it, and (which is, perhaps, of more consequence) without declaring on what principle I will *not* consent that any step, however harmless, shall be taken.

What more harmless than to disfranchise a corrupt borough in Cornwall, which has exercised its franchise amiss, and brought shame on itself, and on the system of which it is a part?—Nothing. I have no sort of objection to doing, as Parliament has often done in such cases, (supposing always the case to be proved,)—to disfranchising the borough, and rendering it incapable of abusing its franchise in future. But, though I have no objection to doing this, I will *not* do it on the principle of speculative improvement. I

do it on the principle of specific punishment for an offence. And I will take good care, that no inference shall be drawn from my consent in this specific case, as to any sweeping concurrence in a scheme of general alteration.

Nay, I should think it highly disingenuous to suffer the radical reformers to imagine that they had gained a single step towards the admission of their theory, by any such instance of particular animadversion on proved misconduct. I consent to such disfranchisement; but I do so, not with a view of furthering the radical system—rather of thwarting it. I am willing to wipe out any blot in the present system, because I mean the present system to stand. I will take away a franchise, because it has been practically abused; not because I am at all disposed to inquire into the origin or to discuss the utility of all such franchises, any more than I mean to inquire, Gentlemen, into your titles to your estates. Disfranchising Grampound, (if that is to be so,) I mean to save Old Sarum.

Now, Sir, I think I deal fairly with the radical reformers;—more fairly than those who would suffer it to be supposed by them, that the disfranchisement of Grampound is to be the beginning of a system of reform: while they know, and I hope mean as well as I do, *not* to reform (in the sense of change) but to preserve the constitution. I would not delude the reformers, if I could; and

it is quite useless to attempt a delusion upon persons quite as sagacious in their generation as any moderate reformers or anti-reformers of us all. They know full well, that the whigs have no more notion than I have of parting with the close boroughs. Not they, indeed! A large, and perhaps the larger, part of them are in their hands. Why, in the assembly to which you send me, Gentlemen, some of those who sit on the same side with me represent, to be sure, less popular places than Liverpool,—but on the bench immediately over against me, I descry, among the most eminent of our rivals for power, scarce any other sort of representatives than members for close, or, if you will, for rotten boroughs. To suppose, therefore, that our political opponents have any thoughts of getting rid of the close boroughs, would be a gross delusion; and, I have no doubt, they will be quite as fair and open with the reformers on this point as I am.

And why, Gentlemen, is it that I am satisfied with a system which, it is said, no man can support who is not in love with corruption? Is it that I, more than any other man, am afraid to face a popular election? To the last question you can give the answer. To the former, I will answer for myself. I do verily believe, as I have already said, that a complete and perfect democratical representation, such as the reformers aim at, cannot exist as part of a mixed government. It may exist,

and, for aught I know or care, may exist beneficially as a whole. But I am not sent to Parliament to inquire into the question, whether a democracy or a monarchy be the best. My lot is cast under the British monarchy. Under that I have lived,—under that I have seen my country flourish,—under that I have seen it enjoy as great a share of prosperity, of happiness, and of glory as I believe any modification of human society to be capable of bestowing; and I am not prepared to sacrifice or to hazard the fruit of centuries of experience, of centuries of struggles, and of more than one century of liberty as perfect as ever blessed any country upon the earth, for visionary schemes of ideal perfectability, or for doubtful experiments even of possible improvement.

I am, therefore, for the House of Commons as a part, and not as the whole, of the government. And, as a part of the government, I hold it to be frantic to suppose, that from the election of members of Parliament you can altogether exclude, by any contrivance, even if it were desirable to do so, the influence of property, rank, talents, family connexion, and whatever else, in the radical language of the day, is considered as intimidation or corruption. I believe, that if a reform to the extent of that demanded by the radical reformers were granted, you would, before an annual election came round, find that there were new connexions grown up which you must again destroy,

new influence acquired which you must dispossess of its authority ; and that in these fruitless attempts at unattainable purity, you were working against the natural current of human nature.

I believe, therefore, that, contrive how you will, some such human motives of action will find room to operate in the election of members of Parliament. I think that this must and ought to be so, unless you mean to exclude from the concerns of the nation all inert wealth, all inactive talent,—the retired, the aged, and the infirm,—all who cannot face popular assemblies or engage in busy life ; in short, unless you have found some expedient for disarming property of influence, without (what I hope we are not yet ripe for) the abolition of property itself.

I would have by choice—if the choice were yet to be made—I would have in the House of Commons great variety of interests, and I would have them find their way there by a great variety of rights of election ; satisfied that uniformity of election would produce any thing but a just representation of various interests. As to the close boroughs, I know that through them have found their way into the House of Commons men whose talents have been an honour to their kind, and whose names are interwoven with the brightest periods in the history of their country. I cannot think that system altogether vicious which has produced such fruits. Nor can I think that there

should be but one road into that assembly, or that no man should be presumed fit for the deliberations of a senate, who has not had the nerves previously to face the storms of the hustings.

I need not say, Gentlemen, that I am one of the last men to disparage the utility and dignity of popular elections. I have good cause to speak of them in far different language. But, among numberless other considerations which endear to me the favours which I have received at your hands, I confess it is one, that, as your representative, I am enabled to speak my genuine sentiments on this (as I think it) vital question of parliamentary reform, without the imputation of shrinking from popular canvas, or of seeking shelter for myself in that species of representation which, as an element in the composition of Parliament, I never shall cease to defend.

In truth, Gentlemen, though the question of reform is made the pretext of those persons who have vexed the country for some months, I verily believe, that there are very few even of them who either give credit to their own exaggerations, or care much about the improvements which they recommend. Why, do we not see that the most violent of the reformers of the day are aiming at seats in that assembly, which, according to their own theories, they should have left to wallow in its own pollution, discountenanced and unredeemed? It is true, that if they found their way

there, they might endeavour to bring us to a sense of our misdeeds, and to urge us to redeem our character by some self-condemning ordinance ; but would not the authority of their names, as our associates, have more than counterbalanced the force of their eloquence as our reformers ?

But, Gentlemen, I am for the whole constitution. The liberty of the subject as much depends on the maintenance of the constitutional prerogatives of the Crown,—on the acknowledgment of the legitimate power of the other House of Parliament, as it does in upholding that supreme power (for such is the power of the purse, in one sense of the word, though not in the sense of the resolution of 1648) which resides in the democratical branch of the constitution. Whatever beyond its just proportion was gained by one part, would be gained at the expense of the whole ; and the balance is now, perhaps, as nearly poized as human wisdom can adjust it. I fear to touch that balance, the disturbance of which must bring confusion on the nation.

Gentlemen, I trust there are few, very few, reasonable and enlightened men ready to lend themselves to projects of confusion. But I confess I very much wish, that all who are not ready to do so would consider the ill effect of any countenance given, publicly or by apparent implication, to those whom, in their hearts and judgments,

they despise. I remember that most excellent and able man, Mr. Wilberforce, once saying, in the House of Commons, that he “never believed an opposition really to wish mischief to the country; that they only wished just so much mischief as might drive their opponents out, and place themselves in their room.” Now, Gentlemen, I cannot help thinking, that there are some persons tampering with the question of reform something in the same spirit. They do not go so far as the reformers; they even state irreconcilable differences of opinion; but to a certain extent they agree and even co-operate with them. They co-operate with them in inflaming the public feeling not only against the government, but against the support given by Parliament to that government, in the hope, no doubt, of attracting to themselves the popularity which is lost to their opponents, and thus being enabled to correct and retrieve the errors of a displaced administration. Vain and hopeless task to raise such a spirit and then to govern it! They may stimulate the steeds into fury, till the chariot is hurried to the brink of a precipice; but do they flatter themselves that they can then leap in, and, hurling the incompetent driver from his seat, check the reins just in time to turn from the precipice and avoid the fall?—I fear they would attempt it in vain. The impulse, once given, may be too impetuous to be controlled;

and, intending only to change the guidance of the machine, they may hurry it and themselves to irretrievable destruction.

May every man who has a stake in the country, whether from situation, from character, from wealth, from his family, and from the hopes of his children,—may every man who has a sense of the blessings for which he is indebted to the form of government under which he lives, see that the time is come, at which his decision must be taken, and, when once taken, steadfastly acted upon,—for or against the institutions of the British monarchy! The time is come at which there is but that line of demarcation. On which side of that line we, Gentlemen, shall range ourselves, our choice has long ago been made. In acting upon that our common choice, with my best efforts and exertions, I shall at once faithfully represent your sentiments, and satisfy my own judgment and conscience.

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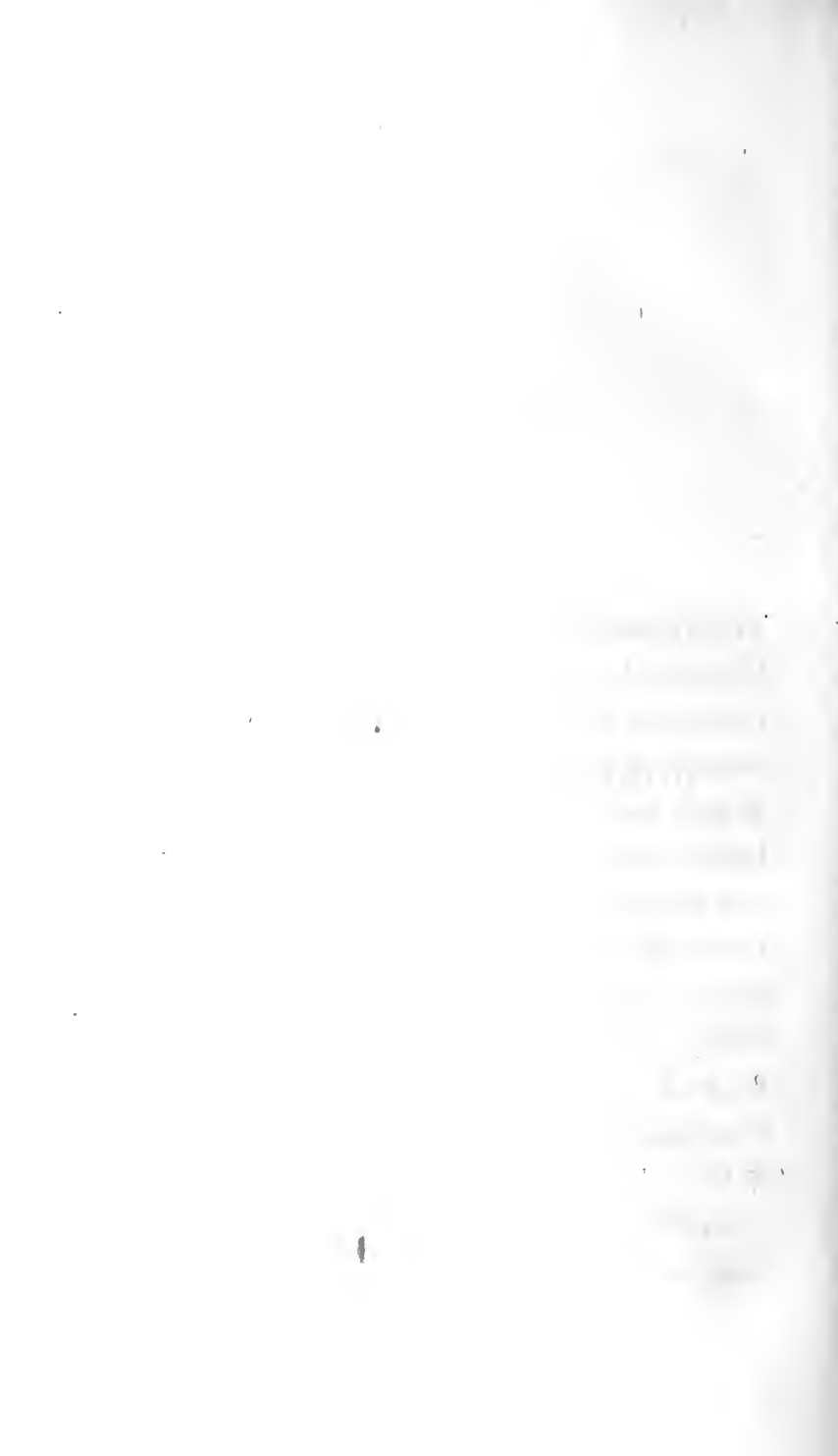
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SPEECHES

AT

PUBLIC DINNERS IN 1822.



INTRODUCTION.

THE Honourable the Directors of the East India Company having, in the year 1822, chosen Mr. Canning to fill the important station of Governor General of Fort William, in the Presidency of Bengal, the seat of the Supreme Government of British India, and the right honourable gentleman having accepted the appointment, he visited Liverpool, in the month of August, for the purpose of taking leave of his friends and constituents, previous to his intended departure from England. He resided, during his visit, at Seaforth-house, the seat of John Gladstone, Esq., M.P.

On Friday, the 23d of August, Mr. Canning dined with the Canning Club, John Gladstone,

Esq., M.P., in the chair. On the Friday following a farewell dinner was given to the right honourable gentleman in the Lyceum News-room, which was fitted up for the occasion with great taste. Between four and five hundred noblemen and gentlemen sat down to dinner, Henry Blundell Hollinshead, Esq., in the chair. The speeches which compose the following series were delivered at these entertainments; and they are among the most brilliant effusions of Mr. Canning's highly-gifted mind.

The subjoined address was presented to the right honourable gentleman, at Seaforth-house, on Friday, the 30th of August, by a deputation from the associated commercial bodies of the port, consisting of the gentlemen whose signatures are affixed to it. On which occasion Mr. Irlam, as chairman of the oldest association, (the West India,) addressed Mr. Canning, on behalf of the deputation, as follows:

“ Mr. Canning,—We have the honour of
 “ waiting upon you for the purpose of presenting
 “ an address from the merchants of Liverpool,
 “ expressive of the high sense they entertain of

“ the services which you have rendered them,
 “ since you have been their representative in Par-
 “ liament, and which I shall now have the
 “ pleasure of reading :

‘ TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE GEORGE CANNING.

‘ SIR,—Having been deputed, by the associated commercial
 ‘ bodies of Liverpool, to convey to you their respectful acknow-
 ‘ ledgments for the various and important services rendered by
 ‘ you to this town, whilst you have been its representative in
 ‘ Parliament, we have much pleasure and satisfaction in express-
 ‘ ing the deep sense they entertain of the obligations you have
 ‘ imposed upon them by your constant and zealous attention to
 ‘ their interests; by the kindness and impartiality with which all
 ‘ the applications for your assistance have been received; and
 ‘ by the prompt exertion of your splendid talents in the promo-
 ‘ tion of every object in which the character and prosperity of
 ‘ this great commercial community have been involved.

‘ We, therefore, beg to tender you their most grateful and
 ‘ hearty thanks, accompanied by their best wishes for your future
 ‘ health and happiness.

‘ We have the honour to be, very respectfully,

‘ Sir,

‘ Your most obedient humble servants,

‘ GEORGE IRLAM, Chairman,

‘ CHARLES LAWRENCE, Deputy Chairman,

‘ *Of the Association of West India Planters and Merchants.*

‘ ALEXANDER MACGREGOR, Chairman,

‘ WILLIAM RATHBONE, Deputy Chairman,

‘ *Of the American Chamber of Commerce.*

- ‘ THOMAS CASE, Chairman,
- ‘ JOSEPH SANDARS, Deputy Chairman,
‘ *Of the Underwriters’ Association.*
- ‘ ROBERT GLADSTONE, Chairman,
- ‘ THOMAS LEATHOM, Deputy Chairman,
‘ *Of the Ship-owners’ Association.*
- ‘ JOHN CARTER, Chairman,
- ‘ NICHOLAS ROBINSON, Deputy Chairman,
‘ *Of the Corn Exchange Association.*
- ‘ THOMAS F. DYSON, Chairman,
- ‘ RICHARD HARRISON, Deputy Chairman,
‘ *Of the Portugal, Brazil, South American, and Mexican
Association.*
- ‘ ROBERT BENSON, Chairman,
- ‘ JOSEPH HIBBERSON, Deputy Chairman,
‘ *Of the East India Association.*
- ‘ FRANCIS JORDAN, Chairman,
- ‘ DAVID HODGSON, Deputy Chairman,
‘ *Of the Irish Association.*
- ‘ ROBERT GLADSTONE, Chairman,
- ‘ THOMAS MOORE, Deputy Chairman,
‘ *Of the Baltic Association.*
- ‘ JOHN HOLMES, Chairman,
- ‘ JAMES BOURNE, Deputy Chairman,
‘ *Of the Salt-shippers’ Association.’*

“ It is only necessary for me to add,” continued Mr. Irlam, “ that this address has been
 “ approved and sanctioned by the UNANIMOUS
 “ votes of ALL the mercantile associations; and
 “ to assure you, that we have, personally, the
 “ highest gratification in placing it in your
 “ hands.”

To this address Mr. Canning, sensibly affected, replied as follows :

“ Gentlemen,—It is needless for me to say,
 “ as you cannot but yourselves perceive, what
 “ feelings this unanimous expression of your
 “ approbation has excited in my mind ; or how
 “ particularly I am affected by what you, Sir,
 “ have been kind enough to communicate to me
 “ with respect to the combination of signatures
 “ affixed to this address.

“ It has been my endeavour, as I felt it to be
 “ my duty, to avoid, in my attention to your
 “ interests and concerns, general and individual,
 “ any shade of discrimination, with reference to
 “ divisions of sentiment which might prevail
 “ among you with respect either to local or na-
 “ tional politics. The marked and eager concur-
 “ rence of so many persons of politics decidedly
 “ adverse to mine, in so peculiar and so cordial
 “ a manifestation of acknowledgment, satisfies
 “ me that I have been fortunate enough to
 “ execute my purpose of impartiality. Of that
 “ impartiality I now reap the reward.

“ To those among you with whom I have the
 “ happiness to agree in political sentiment, and

“ to whom I owe so many obligations for continued marks of friendship and support, it is unnecessary for me, now, to repeat my sense of those obligations. They will not suspect me of being wanting in what is due to them. And, I am sure, they will pardon me for putting as prominently forward as I have done, the particular gratification which they will feel with me and for me,—the gratification arising from the union, on this occasion, with their names, of the names of so many of those persons to whom they and I have been strenuously, but honourably opposed.”

SPEECH

AT THE CANNING CLUB, ON FRIDAY, THE 23D OF AUGUST,
1822.

GENTLEMEN,

I AM really and unaffectedly overpowered by the manner in which you have had the goodness to receive the mention of my name; and, if my worthy friend, your president, was apprehensive that, in drinking the last toast, which included what might be understood as a compliment to yourselves, amongst a great number of your fellow-townsmen and fellow-countrymen, you were in danger of incurring the charge of egotism, how much more difficult is the task which is imposed upon me, of acknowledging, in adequate terms, the kindness which you have manifested towards me individually!

Gentlemen, there is nothing of egotism, there is nothing of undue partiality, in your cherishing towards each other those feelings of respect and regard which naturally arise from a community of

opinion. On the contrary, all the analogies of our political constitution peculiarly favour such associations. They are eminently calculated for the conservation of those principles in which they originate. You love your country, as comprehending in itself all the charities of private life; and when, in cultivating those charities, you form amongst yourselves societies such as this, cemented by an agreement in sound principles,—principles of attachment to the free, the popular, but, at the same time, monarchical character of the government under which it is our happiness to live,—you create so many depositories of those principles, uninvincible when the feeling of loyalty is generally prevalent; but useful, in the highest degree, when the contagion of other principles is abroad. In northern climes, the essence of a generous vintage is often preserved in a small liquid nucleus, which remains unfrozen amidst the surrounding congelation:—that nucleus, when the time of thaw comes, diffuses itself through the whole, and communicates to the mass its spirit and its flavour. So, I trust, that in all times,—even in times such as the worst that we have seen, and such as, I hope, we are not likely soon to see again,—in this club will be constantly preserved the spirit of loyalty and constitutional freedom, to be diffused, when the occasion shall arise, amongst the community with which you are surrounded.

Gentlemen, to come, however reluctantly, to what more immediately concerns myself, and to the occasion to which your worthy chairman has alluded as now bringing me among you,—that of bidding you farewell. It is, now, ten years since I have been connected with this town. It is nearly as long since this society grew up out of that connexion. During that period, I can say, I hope without the danger of contradiction, that there is not, so far as I know, a single individual—I am sure I can say, that there is not a single interest, belonging to this town, which has not had, when required, its share of my active attention, and which has not, and ever will have, a share in my most intense and anxious good-will.

Gentlemen, you embodied yourselves at a time when the country was in great difficulties, both at home and abroad. The councils to which we gave our cordial support have gloriously surmounted the external difficulties, and surmounted them,—not, as those who were then opposed to us recommended,—by compromise, by truckling, or by a mere accidental, lucky escape;—but by perseverance, by steadiness, by confidence in ourselves, in our country, and in our cause, by a triumph without example, as our exertions were without precedent or parallel.

Unfortunately, great efforts are not to be made without great sacrifices; and, as the overstrained exertion of the political, as well as of the physical

body, produces lassitude and exhaustion, unfortunately, the conclusion of our dangers from without was followed by internal dangers, which, if it was not more difficult to overcome, it was infinitely more painful to combat. In combating such dangers, we were animated by none of the feelings which sustained us during the conflict with the foreign foe. We felt, that we were at war with those who ought to have been our fellows in sentiment as in country; and our triumph was painful in its execution, though just and merciful in its purpose. Long may those over whom it was achieved share, in peace and tranquillity, the benefit of its achievement!

I would fain hope, indeed, Gentlemen, that we have no more such struggles, no more such triumphs to apprehend. Looking abroad through Europe, I see no near prospect of a call upon this country for any foreign exertion. At home, I do not disguise from myself that I see great difficulties and great distress; but I see those difficulties and that distress in quarters where education and intelligence may be expected to counteract intemperance of feeling, to correct prejudice, and to discountenance faction. The suffering was, erewhile, in those classes of society with whom suffering naturally begets impatience and absorbs reflection, and delivers over the sufferer, in pardonable and pitiable delusion, a prey to every designing demagogue who points out resistance

as a remedy. It exists now, I am grieved to acknowledge, in higher classes of society, not less entitled to sympathy, not less objects of compassion, and, where practicable, of relief; but who know that their safety, as well as their prosperity, is bound up with the peace of the kingdom, and who, when they are satisfied that the privations which they now endure are such as neither laws nor governments can cure, will be cautious not to lend their authority to any schemes which, under pretence of alleviating present and partial evils, may lead to the disturbance of their country. I am confident, that having, during a great struggle of so many years, preached patience to the humbler classes of the community, the higher will not now desert their duty, by refusing, in their turn, to practise the same degree of patience which has been generally displayed by those beneath them.

For, Gentlemen, apart from the interests of separate classes, we have all a common interest in the conservation of that order of things which is the security of the whole. We must feel, I am sure, and none feel more than those whom I am addressing, that it would be a peevish and unthinking spirit which, under the irritation of a temporary inconvenience, should quarrel, not with the immediate sources of immediate suffering, but with all that surrounds them, with all that is contemporary with them, with passive circumstances as well as with active causes; as a child,

in its anger, beats the ground because for a moment it has fallen. To maintain to our native land that supremacy which it has long exercised, we must look to the maintenance of its institutions ; and if, in a moment of uncomfortable pressure, we lay hold, in anger, on those established institutions, and shake them to ruin, we may be perfectly sure, that, while we procure no remedy for the evil that assails us, we shall take from our posterity,—probably from ourselves, the means of safety as well as the hope of reparation.

But, Gentlemen, enough of general reflection. In my desire to avoid the temptation of egotism in what I address to you, I have wandered from my immediate purpose.

Gentlemen, I owe it to you, in common with all my constituents, to state the grounds on which I am about to separate from you. I have never, (I call past events to bear me witness,)—I have never sought or accepted office, except on principles of honour. I have never hesitated to relinquish it, when I have thought that either public duty or individual honour required its relinquishment. In 1812, when a private individual, and having recently declined the highest official honours of the state, I was returned by you to Parliament, after a contest of unexampled exertion. You were good enough to return me again, when I became a member of the administration. I have since quitted that administration, on a question

wholly unconnected with its general course of policy, and without the smallest diminution of attachment to the public principles which I have uniformly professed, or the smallest relaxation in my support of them. When called to office, in 1816, I was called to a department perfectly alien from my official habits, and with the business of which I had no previous acquaintance: but, in the course of nearly five years' diligent administration of that department, it has so happened, that I am supposed, by those in whom the law has vested the power of appointing to the government of India, to have qualified myself for the more immediate direction of that government, over the concerns of which it has been my duty to exercise a distant superintendence.

Many obvious circumstances, undoubtedly, would make it more agreeable to me to remain in this country. I see around me more than one hundred and sixty motives for so wishing to remain. But, Gentlemen, I hold that a public man is, unless he can show cause of honour or duty to the contrary, bound to accept a trust which he is selected as competent to administer for the public interest.

Gentlemen, those in whom the law, as I have said, vests the power of appointment (subject to the approbation of the Crown) have done me the honour to think, that I may be the humble instrument of conferring some benefit on the population

of an extensive empire. I fear they overrate my capacity for the task which they impose upon me, as your kindness has overrated my services to you. But I have not felt myself at liberty to decline a task, at once so difficult and so honourable;—I must execute it to the best of my ability. Gentlemen, in leaving your service, it is my pride to carry with me testimonies of your satisfaction. I hope I may, without indecent vanity, add, that in quitting the House of Commons, it is a consolation to me to quit it not defeated nor disgraced.

If, Gentlemen, you and I are separated by space, let us continue united by sentiment and by kindness. I leave here, in your keeping, a name, insignificant as it belongs to an individual, but consecrated by the principles of which you have made it the symbol. Guard it, not for its own sake, but for the sake of those its accompaniments. While it may be my lot to administer a government, of necessity in a great measure discretionary, I shall reflect, that there is, in my own country, a community in which my name is cherished, as associated with rational liberty, with the principles of a free government, and with the institutions of a free people. Guard you my memory, and I shall cherish yours. Removed from you by thousands of miles, it will be a pleasure to me to think, that I am occasionally remembered by you; and be assured, that, in

whatever part of the world I may be stationed, the members of this society will have a place in my remembrance and regard.

Gentlemen, permit me to conclude with proposing, with a slight variation, your usual standing toast—"Permanency and Prosperity to this Club."

SPEECH

ON THE SAME OCCASION.

GENTLEMEN,

PERMIT me to take leave of you for the night, with renewed acknowledgments for the kindness with which you have received me. These acknowledgments I cannot better express than in one of the toasts which I find upon your paper, embodying, as it does, the sentiments that I entertain towards you and towards the community of which you are a part, and of which I have been now nearly ten years a faithful, I hope, and, I am sure, a favoured representative. It has been held, Gentlemen, by writers and speakers upon public subjects, that however commerce may

enrich a state, it has drawbacks which more than balance its advantages,—in debasement of principle, and in the lowering of high-minded feeling. If this was ever true of any state, it is not true of England; if it was ever true of any town, it is not true of Liverpool. In proposing to you, therefore, your accustomed toast, “The good old Town of Liverpool and the Trade thereof,” I express, in homely language, of which, however, every word has its value, your cultivation of “good principles;” your attachment to the “old” institutions of England; and the combination of those principles and those attachments with a flourishing “trade,” which, so far from debasing the community which it enriches, has, with expanding wealth, brought proportionate expansion of intellect; and, with increasing prosperity, has increased your devotion and attachment to the constitution of your country, as the source from which national prosperity springs.

SPEECH

AT THE PUBLIC DINNER, IN THE LYCEUM ROOM, ON FRIDAY,
THE 30TH OF AUGUST, 1822.

GENTLEMEN,

OFTEN as I have had occasion to express my thanks to my constituents, I never rose under feelings so oppressive as those which I experience at the present moment. It is not that the manifestation of your kindness is new or strange, for it began with your first unsolicited selection of me, and has grown with the growth of our acquaintance: but the more than usual,—the crowning kindness of this moment, when I come among you to return thanks for the past, and to terminate our connexion for the future, is really overcoming, and almost takes from me the faculty of expressing the excess of acknowledgment which it inspires.

Gentlemen, let those who doubt the practical excellence of the political institutions of Great Britain look at the scene which this assembly exhibits;—and when they see how far an humble individual, without personal distinction, or personal claims of any kind on the consideration or good-will of a great community, can earn their

good opinion, and, I may venture to say, their affection, simply by the performance of his public duty as their representative, let them consider what guarantees there must be for the security of a country in which such connexions are formed, and for a constitution under which such a public interchange of reciprocal esteem and reciprocal obligations is maintained. Never can such a country sink under the vainly apprehended danger of despotism;—never, I trust, can such a constitution be made the victim of that opposite and equally formidable danger,—of anarchy, which would involve not only the ruin of all that is venerable in our establishments, but the extinction of all that is estimable in social life.

Gentlemen, there are, indeed, other roads to power and to popularity. Power may, perhaps, be gained, and its continued tenure secured, by a subserviency without limit or hesitation; and there is a cheap, but dazzling, popularity for those who will either invent a catalogue of imaginary evils, or, attributing to man the acts of Providence, will promise instant relief to sufferings arising out of inevitable necessity, and to calamities which endurance only can cure; who will challenge all existing institutions as misgovernment, and mount and ride in the whirlwind of reform. But, Gentlemen, neither of these courses have I ever thought it consistent with honour or with duty to pursue. He may, perhaps, be held

a timid and unwise politician, who will not unscrupulously lend himself to objects which he cannot approve; and he may be sometimes an unpopular representative, who does not lay the foundation of his popularity in flattery of the passions of the people. For the people are open to flattery as well as kings; and that language is not more remote from truth which exalts prerogative beyond the bounds of reason, than that which speaks incessantly of popular rights, without reference to corresponding duties. But, Gentlemen, no such sacrifices of truth have been necessary to obtain and to retain your good-will. I have found, in this enlightened community, comprehending, as it necessarily does, conflicting opinions as well as, in a certain degree, conflicting interests,—I have found a singular temperance in your differences of political opinion. I have found generally prevalent among you a warm but reasoning loyalty, consistent with perfect independence of thought; and an ardent love of liberty, combined with a determined hostility to all the excesses of faction. It is in sympathizing with these your feelings, and participating in these your sentiments, that I have acquired the share which I have the happiness to hold in your good opinion; though sure I am, that, with all my endeavours to earn it, I cannot have succeeded in deserving that excess of it which you have been pleased to manifest to me on this occasion.

Gentlemen, on former occasions, when I have had the honour to address meetings like the present, the task has been much more easy. The topics on which I then had to dilate belonged to the feelings of the moment. We have, on those occasions, had great struggles to animate us, we have had great victories to celebrate; and we all know, that, in the celebration of these municipal victories, some exaggeration of triumph is not only permitted, but is freely and frankly allowed by one party to the other. But on the present occasion, warmly as I feel all that my immediate friends and supporters have done for me and expressed towards me, I stand peculiarly circumstanced; a peculiarity glorious, I think, to the town as well as to myself:—I stand in the peculiar circumstances of not knowing that I have among you, at this moment, even a political enemy. I have received, Gentlemen, in the course of this day,—pardon the boast, for the cause of it lies, as it well may, very near to my breast,—I have received this morning, from the associated commercial bodies of the town, an address, acknowledging, in terms far beyond the merit of any services which I have laboured to perform, my conduct as representative of Liverpool. Among the signatures to that address, representing, as those signatures do, all the various classes into which this extensive commercial community is divided,—among these signatures, I say, every

second name is the name of some individual who has taken an active part against me in some, if not in every election. That I have deserved this unexampled concurrence of approbation, I do not pretend ;—that I have received it, will be, to the latest hour of my life, a pride beyond what I should be warranted in expressing here ; and a pride, Gentlemen, which I shall transmit to my children.

Such a testimony as this disables me from referring, with any thing like an adverse feeling, to those whose political opinions we have combated, heretofore, with licensed animosity,—an animosity, however, which never survived the contest which gave birth to it. While I maintain, unshaken, my own political opinions, and while I feel myself called upon to render to you, this day, an account of those opinions, I beg to be understood as saying nothing in hostility to any man who may differ from me, or who may have opposed me.

Gentlemen, it so happens that I can render this account with the greater impartiality, because, in addition to those general subjects upon which, retrospectively, we are all now tolerably well agreed,—to the war in which the country was engaged when I first came amongst you, and of which, while the success was doubtful, the policy was naturally enough disputed, but with respect to which all memory of difference

has been since nearly extinguished in acclamations at its final triumph;—in addition, I say, to that great question, and to the questions which grew out of it, there were, when I came amongst you, and there are still, two great national questions; upon one of which I have the misfortune to differ from the great body of my most respectable friends and supporters in this town, almost as widely as, on the other, I differ with their adversaries. I allude, Gentlemen, to the Catholic question as the first, and to the question of parliamentary reform as the second, of those national questions.

Gentlemen, on the first of these questions, you are well aware of my opinions; for, on one of the earliest occasions on which I had the honour to address the inhabitants of Liverpool, I told them fairly, that, in accepting my services, they accepted the services of one who, on that question, had taken his part; and who could not, in deference to their opinions or prejudices, call them which you will, abate a jot of his anxiety for its success. Accordingly, Gentlemen, at the different periods and under the various modifications under which that question has come to be discussed, I have given it my most strenuous support. But I have, in all such cases, dealt honestly by you, Gentlemen; for I have rarely, if ever, given my support to that measure in the House of Commons, without

openly acknowledging, that, in so doing, I spoke against what I believed to be the prevailing sense of my constituents. I have not, therefore, misused the weight of your authority, nor compromised any opinion of yours adverse to my own.

Gentlemen, if I were remaining in this country, and continuing to take my part in Parliament, I should continue to walk in the same direction; but I think, (and, as I may not elsewhere have an opportunity of expressing this opinion, I am desirous of expressing it here,) —I think that, after the experience of a fruitless struggle of more than ten years, I should, as an individual, (speaking for none but myself, and not knowing whether I carry any other person's opinion with me,) be induced, from henceforth, or, perhaps, after one more general trial, to seek upon that question a liberal compromise, rather than persevere in fighting, perhaps ten years more, in vain for unqualified concession.

I might have had some hesitation, under other circumstances, in making this avowal, knowing that it is generally an easier as well as a prouder course to persevere, even in what is hopeless, than fairly to avow a disposition to compromise. But in what I say on this occasion, I can have no other object than to declare a sincere opinion. I alluded in recent debates, in the House of Commons, to the

policy of accepting partial concessions, and to my regret that I had once been myself a party to the refusal of them. I have since revolved the subject much in my mind : and I confess, that, next to the immediate success of the whole measure, which I have as much as ever at heart, I should wish, as well for the benefit of those most immediately concerned, as for the general peace of the kingdom, to see such an arrangement as should remove all practical cause of complaint on the one side, without inciting vague and indefinite apprehensions on the other ; referring to a more favourable opportunity, and to the progress of public opinion, that complete and final settlement, of which I shall never cease to maintain the expediency as well as the justice.

I turn now, Gentlemen, to the second question, with which, as much as with the former, my name has been connected in popular observation, and often in popular obloquy. I am mistaken, Gentlemen,—I mean, I am misrepresented, my purpose is mistaken, if it is supposed that I impute to those who support the question of parliamentary reform a distinct apprehension of the consequences to which, I think, their doctrines lead, and a design to promote those consequences. It is with their doctrines that I quarrel, and not with their motives ; and it has been my desire always to

discuss the question argumentatively rather than angrily, with those who are opposed to me in opinion. I wish them to state to me—to me? I wish them to state to themselves, distinctly, the object which they have in view, and the means they think they have to attain it. Why, Gentlemen, what are the general arguments by which we are urged to admit a change in the constitution of the House of Commons? These arguments are derived from expensive wars, from heavy taxes, and from severe enactments, constituting, as is affirmed, so many outrageous inroads upon the constitution. Granted, for argument's sake, that all these charges are true. Granted that all the proceedings of Parliament, for many years past, have been reprehensible. But were they the proceedings of the House of Commons alone? Does the British constitution act by a single organ? Has there been no concurrence in the maintenance of those wars, no consent to the imposition of those taxes, no co-operation in the passing of those enactments? Is there no other assembly in existence which partook of the opinions on which the House of Commons has proceeded, and which would make, therefore, the reform of the House of Commons nugatory for the professed purposes, unless the co-ordinate authority was also reformed? If you reform the House of Commons, on the grounds of past misconduct, what will you do with the

House of Lords! If the House of Commons is to be reformed, because it sanctioned the war with America; if it is to be reformed, because it maintained the war with France,—(sinking, for a moment, the undoubted fact, that the war with America was a favourite measure with the people of this country as much as with the government; sinking, for a moment, the undoubted fact, that the war with France was emphatically the war of the nation;)—if the House of Commons, I ask, is to be reformed, because it approved and supported those wars; if it is to be reformed, because it passed laws for the suppression of internal disturbance, is the House of Lords to go free, which consented to those wars, and of those acts consented to all, while some of them, and those not the least severe, it originated? If no such reform is to be applied to the House of Lords, what is the supposed effect upon that house of a reform of the House of Commons? Let us fairly speak out:—Is the unreformed House of Lords to continue in full vigour, to counteract the will of the reformed House of Commons? Where, then, is the use of the reform? Or, is the reformed House of Commons to act upon the House of Lords by intimidation and compulsion? Aye!—That, to be sure, is what must be meant, if there be truth in the argument; but that is what no man will say.

My quarrel, then, with this course of argument is,—not that it aims at an alteration,—at an improvement, if you please, in the House of Commons; but,—that it aims at quite another thing than a House of Commons as part of a legislature. The legislative authority of the state, according to the constitution as it stands, is shared between two houses of Parliament:—the suggested reform goes to provide a single instrument, which shall not only do its own work, but inevitably control the working of the other; which, if the object of the reform is obtained, must act so powerfully, that it must, in the very nature of things, reject any co-ordinate power, and speedily act alone.

I have never stated it as a beauty of the constitution, that Old Sarum should have but as many voters as representatives. Let it have two thousand, with all my heart. I have never stated it as a beauty and perfection of the constitution, that this or that great peer should be able to return persons of his choice as the representatives of the people in Parliament. I have never said, that detected corruption should not be punished. In God's name, disfranchise other corrupt boroughs as you disfranchised Gram-pound. But I have said, and I repeat, that I see no way of counteracting the influence of property, and that I can imagine no process of amputation of close boroughs,—on the ground,

not of practical punishment, but of speculative improvement, and on the principle that the House of Commons ought to speak the direct sense of the people,—which does not lead, by inevitable inference, to a total alteration of the functions of the House of Commons. If by “people” is meant the nation, (and it is in the equivocal use of this word that much of the fallacy of the argument lies;)—if an assembly “representing the people” is meant to be the undoubted, exclusive organ of national will,—I ask, when the nation has once such an organ, what room is there for another legislative establishment? How can a second exist, and what is it to do?

Gentlemen, on a recent occasion, in a neighbouring county, a most respectable gentleman, respectable from family, respectable from private character and from talents, has done me the honour to refer to my opinions with some expressions of surprise. Mr. Fawkes (I name him with due honour, for what I believe to be his individual worth) expressed great surprise, that I, being the representative of the second commercial town in this great kingdom, should feel any anxiety for the fate of the close parts of the representation. Surprise for surprise. For I may, in my turn, be surprised, that a gentleman of Yorkshire, in which county the clamour for reform began, some years ago, on the ground of

the inadequacy of its own particular representation, should seize the present moment, when that representation has just been doubled by Parliament, for agitating anew the question of parliamentary reform. I know no grievance, in the present constitution of Parliament, which has been so constantly dinned into my ears, from my very youth, as the destitute state of Yorkshire in being allowed to send only two of her sons to Parliament. She has been long, “like Niobe, all “tears” on this account: but now the grievance is remedied; and, at the very moment when this is done, one of the most gifted of the sons of this unhappy matron comes forward, and, instead of returning thanks in behalf of his parent county, expatiates loudly, in her name, on the inadequate representation of England! A Yorkshireman might have been too well pleased with the recent attention to her long-neglected claims to be in a humour to find fault with Parliament just at this moment. But, Gentlemen, why am I, more than Mr. Fawkes, to confine my attention to my own particular share of the representation? So far from my situation, as representative of the second town in the empire, stifling my voice on this subject, I have not the slightest hesitation in saying, that if I were member for Old Sarum, I should, more probably, hold my tongue upon it. It is because I am member for Liverpool; because I can have no shadow of personal interest

in maintaining that more imperfect species of representation, which I do, nevertheless, conscientiously maintain;—it is because my opinion cannot be questioned, as influenced by motives of individual convenience, that I feel a confidence, which I otherwise might not feel, in exposing what I think the fallacy of those doctrines which push the principle of direct personal representation to an extent such as, if adopted, must change the constitution.

Let any man say, that his views of reform go no farther than to the removal of blots, and I am with him. But it is because the arguments for reform tend much further;—it is because they tend not to remedy, but to destroy; not to correct what may be amiss in a system of representation which combines all species of property, admits all species of industry, opens the door to all species of talent;—it is because they appear to me to tend to a system to be founded exclusively on what is called the power of the people; a power which, if recognised in the sense in which they proclaim it, must act, not in concert with other powers, not by a conflict and compromise of different interests; but by its own uncontrolled authority, supreme and alone;—it is for this reason that I think it right to oppose, *in limine*, projects of parliamentary reform.

Gentlemen, it is said, however, that, besides the faulty composition of the House of Commons,

there is an influence of the Crown which perverts and paralyzes all its functions. My first answer to this proposition is the same which I have made to the proposition for alteration in the House of Commons. How rarely does the House of Lords differ from the other house in its decisions?—How much more rarely does it differ in a more popular sense? Is it the influence of the Crown which predominates in the House of Lords too? If it is,—do you mean to leave the House of Lords still subject to the same influence, and still with an equal voice in the decision of every national question? If not,—is not the project still, though upon another pretext, to erect an instrument which will make the operation of the House of Lords completely nugatory; to place in a new, an untried organ the whole practical energy of the constitution?

I do verily and sincerely believe, that there is no proposition more false, than that the influence of the Crown, any more than its direct power, has increased comparatively with the increasing strength, wealth, and population of the country. To these, if the Crown be good for any thing at all in the constitution, it is necessary that its power and influence should bear some reasonable proportion. I deny that, in the House of Commons,—I deny that, in the House of Lords, such an increase can be shown; but further I contend, that, in speculating upon the practical play

of our constitution, we narrow our view of its efficient principles, of its progress, and of the state in which it now stands, if we do not take into account other powers, extrinsic to the two houses of Parliament, which are at work in the moral and political world, and which require to be balanced and counterpoised in their operation.

What should we think of that philosopher, who, in writing, at the present day, a treatise upon naval architecture and the theory of navigation, should omit wholly from his calculation that new and mighty power,—new, at least, in the application of its might,—which walks the water, like a giant rejoicing in his course;—stemming alike the tempest and the tide;—accelerating intercourse, shortening distances;—creating, as it were, unexpected neighbourhoods, and new combinations of social and commercial relation;—and giving to the fickleness of winds and the faithlessness of waves the certainty and steadiness of a highway upon the land? Such a writer, though he might describe a ship correctly; though he might show from what quarters the winds of heaven blow, would be surely an incurious and an idle spectator of the progress of nautical science, who did not see in the power of STEAM a corrective of all former calculations. So, in political science, he who, speculating on the British constitution, should content himself with marking the distribution of acknowledged technical powers between

the House of Lords, the House of Commons, and the Crown, and assigning to each their separate provinces,—to the Lords their legislative authority,—to the Crown its *veto*, (how often used?)—to the House of Commons its power of stopping supplies, (how often, in fact, necessary to be resorted to?)—and should think that he had thus described the British constitution as it acts and as it is influenced in its action; but should omit from his enumeration that mighty power of Public Opinion, embodied in a Free Press, which pervades, and checks, and, perhaps, in the last resort, nearly governs the whole;—such a man would, surely, give but an imperfect view of the government of England as it is now modified, and would greatly underrate the counteracting influences against which that of the executive power has to contend.

Gentlemen, there is one plain test which I think it wholesome to apply to all speculative projects of political improvement. I consider, first, not how they might operate for the general benefit of mankind:—that is a wide consideration, indeed, and fit to be deeply studied at leisure; but is not, as it appears to me, the immediate business of the British statesman, providing for British interests: and I confess, that as, in private life, I generally look with caution on that diffusive benevolence which neglects the circle immediately around it; so I look with

some little suspicion to that spirit of general improvement which is ready to sacrifice, to a general principle, the immediate and particular safety of one's own country. I inquire, rather, how such projects are likely to operate on the British constitution; which I find to be a monarchy,—a monarchy qualified, indeed, with establishments, which limit, which restrain, which control it,—but fundamentally and essentially a monarchy. I do not think myself bound to enter the lists to show why the British constitution *should be* a monarchy. I am not called upon to demonstrate, *a priori*, that it was necessary that the British constitution should be a monarchy, any more than that Great Britain should be an island. It is quite sufficient for me that I find these things so; it is quite sufficient for me to know that Providence has ordained the one, and that the acts of our ancestors, from immemorial time, acquiesced in and confirmed by a long succession of generations, have clearly ascertained the other; and have thus, although without my individual vote or consent, imposed upon me the duty of allegiance to the monarchy under which I have been born.

I know how tame, and servile, and abject this sort of reasoning sounds, in an age when it is so much more the fashion to appeal to theory than to fact; to try every existing establishment by some abstract model of excellence. But, Gentlemen,

against a popular assembly constituted on the principles on which parliamentary reform is alleged to be necessary, (the effective consequence of which principles does, I willingly admit, go beyond either the avowal, or, I dare say, the intention of those who profess them;)—I say, against a popular assembly, so constituted, no monarchy could stand. Such a government must be, practically, whatever it be in name, a republic. I do not think myself at liberty to discuss the question, whether that be a better kind of government. I feel myself, I confess, circumscribed within the limits of the existing constitution.

“*Spartam nactus es, hanc exorna.*”

Improve, as you can, the constitution which has fallen to your lot. The attempt to alter, by force, that constitution is one which the law has branded in disagreeable terms. I agree with the law; and would endeavour to prevent that from being done through inadvertence, which, undoubtedly, there is no danger of any one's attempting to do by design. In short, in all improvements we must conform to the nature of the country to which we belong:—like the King of Bohemia, who had an extreme desire to be a naval power, but whose laudable ambition was checked by this only impediment,—that there was no seaport in his kingdom!

So much, Gentlemen, as to the principles of parliamentary reform; and as to the principles of my resistance to it, as a general proposition. Let me now call your attention, for a short time, to the practical uses to which parliamentary reform is by its advocates proposed to be applied. Five or six years ago there was great suffering among the labouring classes. Provisions were at such a price as to be almost unattainable by the poorest order of the people. The grievance in which these sufferings originated was alleged to be the corn bill. The corn bill was passed by the influence of the landholders. The remedy was in some change which would put that influence down:—and we all remember what a clamour was then raised for parliamentary reform. Well! Times come round; there is now such a plenty, such a glut of provisions, that the humblest classes of society are enjoying comparative affluence. In the manufacturing districts there is constant and steady employment; at wages somewhat reduced, it is true, but sufficient, in general, for comfortable maintenance. And these blessings are further felt in a reduction of the poor-rates, and, God be thanked, in a remarkable diminution of crime. I do not know, Gentlemen, whether all these particulars constitute a flourishing state of the community: but I do know, that the absence of them was considered as constituting a state of things too

bad to bear ; and I cannot but think, that whatever partial evils accompany these blessings, those who, five or six years ago, thought the Parliament good for nought, because the landholders had passed a corn bill, and because the poor-rates were augmented, and because the calendars were swelled with crime, must now consent to sympathize with prosperity which grows out of the reverse of the evils of which they complained. But, Gentlemen, while the labouring classes of the people are in this state of enjoyment, while work is plenty, while the poor-rates and crimes are diminishing, the growers of corn are suffering. And what is the remedy ? Parliamentary reform ! So that, in the year 1817, when you suffered under high prices, parliamentary reform was the cure for that calamity ; and now, when the landholders are suffering under cheapness, parliamentary reform is necessary the other way ! And for what purpose ? To restore, I suppose, the good old times of 1817. Let me not be understood as underrating the pressure of either of these evils : in both states of things there is much to lament, and in that which now exists there is much which I wish to God I could see the way to cure. But as to parliamentary reform, as the remedy for either,—much more as the remedy for both,—I will ask any man, whether there is common sense in such a proposition ; whether the double clamour for it be not

a presumption rather in favour of the impartiality with which Parliament has acted in both these painful extremes?

But parliamentary reform is the panacea for every evil. I read, a few days ago, (I cannot immediately recollect where,) a story of an artist who had attained great eminence in painting, but who had directed his art chiefly to one favourite object. That object happened to be a *red lion*. His first employment was at a public-house, where the landlord allowed him to follow his fancy. Of course the artist recommended a *red lion*. A gentleman in the neighbourhood, having a new dining-room to ornament, applied to the artist for his assistance; and, in order that he might have full scope for his talents, left to him the choice of a subject for the principal compartment of the room. The painter took due time to deliberate; and then, with the utmost gravity and earnestness—"Don't you think," said he to his employer, "that a handsome *red lion* would have a fine effect in this situation?" The gentleman was not entirely convinced, perhaps; however, he let the painter have his way in this instance; determined, nevertheless, that in his library, to which he next conducted the artist, he would have something of more exquisite device and ornament. He showed him a small panel over his chimney-piece. "Here," says he, "I must have something striking. The

“ space, you see, is but small, the workmanship “ must be proportionably delicate.” “ What “ think you,” says the painter, after appearing to dive deep into his imagination for the suggestion, “ what think you of a *small red lion* ?” Just so it is with parliamentary reform. Whatever may be the evil, the remedy is a parliamentary reform; and the utmost variety that you can extort from those who call themselves “ moderate reformers” is, that they will be contented with a *small red lion* !

Gentlemen, I wish that these theories were only entertaining; but they have mischief in them; and I wish that against them the country should be on its guard. I confess I am against even the *smallest* of these *red lions*; I object not to the size, but to the species. I fear the smallest would be but the precursor of the whole menagerie; and that, if once, propitiated by his smallness, you open the door for his admission, you would find, when you wanted him to turn out again, that he had been pampered to a formidable size in his cage.

Gentlemen, in the times in which we live, there is (disguise it how we may) a struggle going on,—in some countries an open, and in some a tacit struggle, between the principles of monarchy and democracy. God be praised, that in that struggle we have not any part to take. God be praised, that we have long ago arrived

at all the blessings that are to be derived from that which alone can end such a struggle beneficially,—a compromise and intermixture of those conflicting principles. It is not, as it appears to me, the duty of this country to side either with the assailants, where they aim at too much, nor with those who stand on the defensive, when they will grant nothing. England has only to maintain herself on the basis of her own solid and settled constitution, firm, unshaken,—a spectatress interested in the contest only by her sympathies;—not a partisan on either side, but, for the sake of both, a model, and ultimately, perhaps, an umpire. Should we be led, by any false impulse of chivalrous benevolence, to participate in the struggle itself, we commit, and thereby impair, our authority; we abandon the position in which we might hereafter do most good, and may bring the danger of a foreign struggle home to our own hearths and to our own institutions.

Gentlemen, with an audience less enlightened than that which I have had the honour to address, I should have avoided topics of such general interest, and confined myself to the particulars of our local connexion. But, Gentlemen, our connexion is one of principle; it had its foundation in principle; on that it has been raised and cemented. Gentlemen, whatever may be my future destination, it will be a comfort unspeakable

to me to have laid, in that connexion, the foundation, I trust, of mutual and lasting regard ;—which has cheered every stage of our intercourse, and will long survive our separation.

Gentlemen, it may, perhaps, be expected of me, especially after the speech of my worthy friend, your president, that I should say a few words to you on the topics to which he has alluded. I have doubted much and long whether I should refer to those topics at all, or should persevere in the silence which I have hitherto prescribed to myself upon them ;—whether I should incur the risk, on the one hand, of being supposed not to have dealt openly with you ; or, on the other hand, the risk of that misconstruction, of various sorts, to which a public man, who speaks of himself, must expect to be exposed. On full reflection, I have determined to brave the latter danger rather than the former. I prefer submitting to any misconstruction, to any inconvenience, rather than that it should ever be thought that I had repaid your unbounded confidence with any thing like concealment or distrust. Gentlemen, after this preface, you will, perhaps, be, in one sense, disappointed to hear, that all that I have to say is, that, upon my honour, I have nothing to tell. But it is as necessary for me to make that confession, as it would have been to make a communication, had I any to make. I do assure you, that I know as little as

any man that now listens to me, of any arrangements likely to grow out of the present state of things. I cannot pretend ignorance, indeed, of rumours which are in every one's mouth; but I assure you, upon my honour, that, at the moment at which I am speaking to you, I have nothing either to tell or to conceal.

Gentlemen, you will not expect that I shall enter into any explanation as to what might be the decision which I might think it right to take upon any such occurrence as these rumours have in contemplation. This only, Gentlemen, I can frankly declare to you, that, in any such case, my decision would be founded upon an honest and impartial view of public considerations alone, and that it would be determined, not by a calculation of interests, but by a balance and comparison of duties.

Enough, Gentlemen, on a topic to which I doubt whether I should, even now, have alluded, but for the most unexpected, although amicable provocation of my worthy friend in the chair; and I have only now to hope, that having been, as I learn, misconstrued on account of my silence in another place, I shall not be misconstrued in an opposite direction on account of what I have said here. From my silence then, it has been inferred, that I intended ostentatiously to declare a determination to refuse office at home, if it should be proposed to me. I beg I may not be

misconstrued now in an opposite sense, as intending to express, or as feeling, in the slightest degree, any anxiety, any expectation or desire for such a proposal. My only anxiety, I most solemnly declare, is to state the truth to those who have a right to know it, inasmuch as their kindness and attachment to me give them an interest in whatever concerns me.

Gentlemen, wherever my lot may be cast, may this great community continue to flourish in the prosperity now happily beginning to be restored to it, after the fluctuations of war and peace;—in the principles from which it has never swerved, since I have had the honour to be acquainted with it;—in the honourable and liberal spirit which pervades all classes of its society, and which marks even its political divisions;—and in that cordial union which binds all its members together, without distinction of party, in any thing which relates to the interest of your town, or to the benefit of the humbler part of its population. May it flourish an image of splendid commercial greatness, unalloyed by the besetting vices which sometimes grow to such greatness;—an image of those princely merchants whose history one of your own body has illustrated; mixing, like them, with the pursuits of trade, the cultivation of liberal science; decorating your town with the works of art, as much as it is enriched by enterprise and industry; and placing

it, by the variety of its useful, and the munificence of its charitable establishments, among the most celebrated of the cities of the world. May you flourish in the happiness and renown to which these qualities entitle you; and, when you look for another individual to occupy the station which I have, for ten years, filled, may you find one more competent to the task than I have been, —one more devoted to your interests, more anxious for your prosperity, or more thankful for your kindness, I am sure you cannot find.

SPEECH

ON THE SAME OCCASION.

GENTLEMEN,

I RISE to propose a toast which has been omitted in the regular series, and, after proposing it, to bid you good night. Gentlemen, to do any action of life, the most indifferent, for the last time, always carries with it a feeling of melancholy. But when I reflect that I am, for the last time, expressing, in this manner, my sentiments towards those to whom I am so much

indebted ; that I am contemplating, for the last time, so many countenances which have, for ten years past, been turned on me with no other expression than that of kindness and benignity, I confess I feel a degree of embarrassment which I can hardly control. Gentlemen, wherever I may be stationed in future life, a vivid recollection of what I have seen in this town, and of what I now see before me, will be constantly present to my mind. If I visit countries where political liberty is beginning to prevail, but yet struggling with the vices attendant upon change, I shall think of the practice of well-regulated freedom as exhibited in this community. In countries which have not yet obtained the light of liberty, and are not yet capable of enjoying it, it will be pleasing to me to look back upon this land of freedom ; upon the manners and institutions which I leave behind me, and particularly upon the years spent, Gentlemen, in your service ; upon the flattering testimonies of your satisfaction ; and upon the honest performance of duties which your partiality alone enables me to flatter myself that I may have not inadequately discharged. Gentlemen, in terminating so endearing a connexion, what can I say—but that I bid adieu to you with feelings of affection and gratitude,—with feelings, in short, which I will not weary you by endeavouring, in vain, to express. I beg leave to give, “ The worthy and

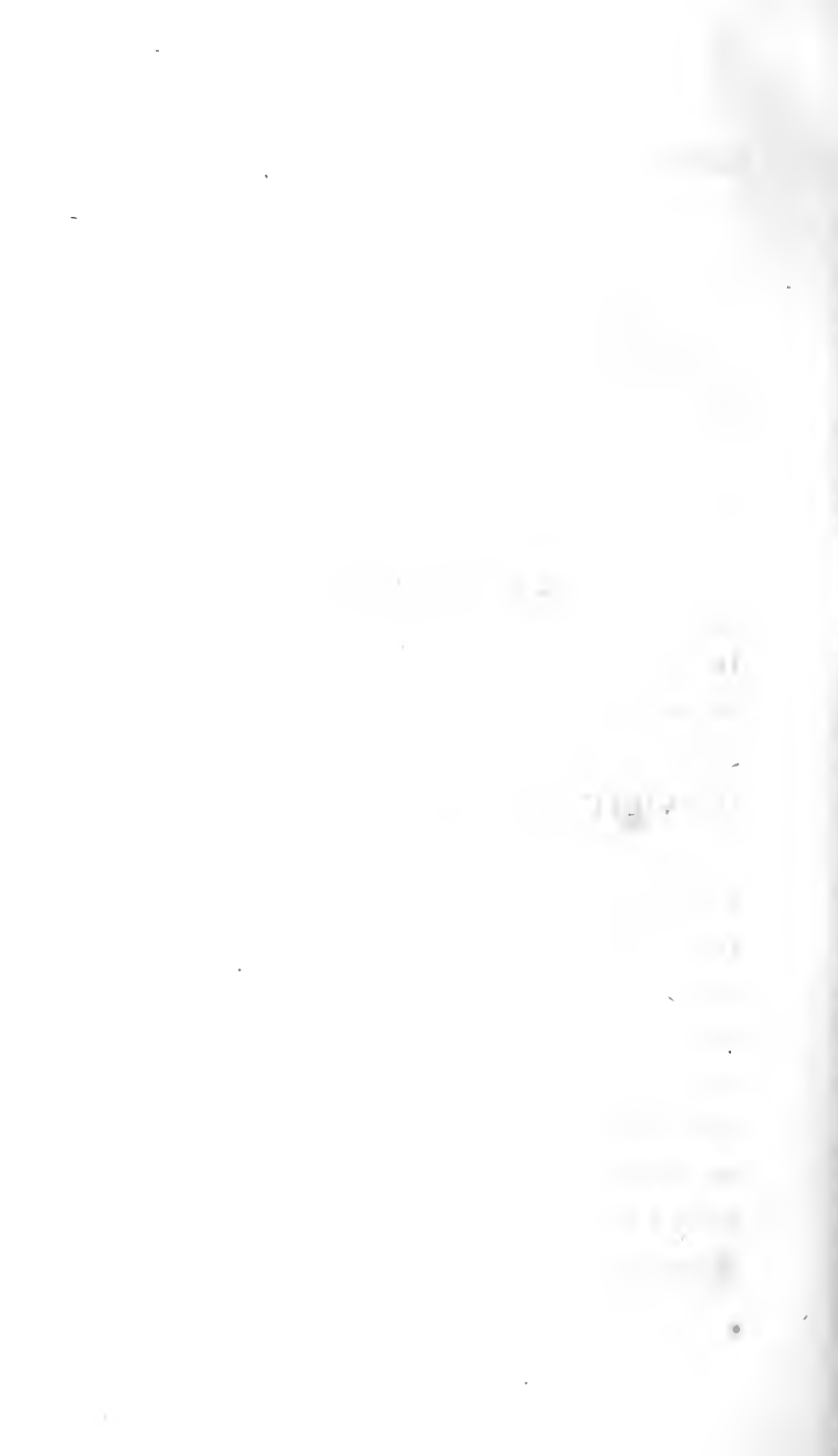
“ Independent Freemen of the ancient and loyal
“ Borough of Liverpool.”

Mr. Canning afterwards rose, and, with evident emotion, said, “ Gentlemen, I now bid you good
“ night, and, what is much more difficult to
“ utter—farewell !”

SPEECHES

DURING A

VISIT TO LIVERPOOL IN 1823.



INTRODUCTION.

IN the month of August, 1823, Mr. Canning, accompanied by Mr. Huskisson, who had succeeded him in the representation of the borough, visited Liverpool.

On Monday, the 25th of that month, Mr. Canning, at the invitation of the Committee of the St. George Steam-packet Company, took an aquatic excursion on board the Emerald Isle steam-packet. Her decks were crowded by upwards of three hundred of the most respectable gentlemen and merchants of the town, comprising men of all political parties, who had been invited to meet the right honourable Foreign Secretary and Mr. Huskisson. Mr. Canning,

on this occasion, received the warm and cordial gratulations of the company.

In the evening, the Mayor, William Molyneux, Esq., entertained a party of about eighty noblemen and gentlemen at dinner, in the Town-hall. Amongst the company were the Right Honourable George Canning, the Right Honourable William Huskisson, Mr. Hughes, *Charge d' Affaires* from the United States of America to Sweden, &c. The two speeches forming the following series were delivered at this entertainment.

SPEECH

IN THE TOWN-HALL, ON MONDAY, THE 25TH OF
AUGUST, 1823.

MR. CANNING said, he could not, in rising to return his thanks for the very flattering manner in which the last toast had been received, confine himself strictly to the expression of his sincere gratitude ; nor sit down without renewing the assurance he had already given, of his readiness, at all times, to serve, to the best of his ability, that important and enlightened community which it had, for ten years, been his pleasure and his pride to represent. That assurance had been given at the period when events, which he could not control, rendered it necessary for him to suggest a separation most painful to his feelings, and which nothing but an imperative sense of duty could have compelled him to propose. He hardly knew whether he felt more grateful to them for the cordiality with which they had originally invited him to their service, or for the

generous, though reluctant, acquiescence with which they had been kind enough to admit the necessity of parting. The parting, however, was only in form; in substance he remained still their friend and their servant: their friend, with undiminished attachments; their servant, with no other diminution of exertion than necessarily resulted from the overwhelming nature of his other occupations. He must not omit to express the gratification which he felt, and which the sight of the present assembly was peculiarly calculated to heighten and illustrate;—the gratification, he meant, of believing, that, whatever might have been the insignificance of his services, the course of his elections for Liverpool had not been unuseful. They had exhibited a series of animated contests and prompt reconciliations; of enmities transitory as the struggle which gave them birth; and of acquaintances and connexions which, he trusted, would long survive the memory of those contests. He had seen the town in all the agitation of conflict, without experiencing or witnessing any thing which it was painful to him to recollect; and he had received proofs, in the course of the day, (many who heard him would understand to what he alluded, though he could not in delicacy particularize them,) how much of mutual personal esteem may grow up amid the conflicts of political hostility. The temper in which he left Liverpool was that in which he

rejoiced now to see it; in which, he hoped, it would long continue; and which the merits of his successor were eminently calculated to maintain. He even flattered himself, that, in these respects, the example of his connexion with Liverpool was not entirely lost upon other scenes of political contest; and he flattered himself still further, that the temper which then pervaded the room in which he was speaking, was not an unapt specimen of the general temperance of the country.

SPEECH

ON THE SAME OCCASION.

MR. CANNING said, that, with the kind permission of the chair, he rose to propose a toast which, he felt confident, would be received by the company with the most sincere and cordial satisfaction. He alluded to the health of the distinguished stranger then near him, who was on his way to Sweden, as the representative of his country, the United States of America. He

was most happy to avail himself of this opportunity, amidst so large an assemblage of some of the first merchants of England, of congratulating that gentleman on the full and uninterrupted intercourse which now existed between his country and our own: an intercourse, of which the value could be nowhere so well understood as in this great town, which was, both in point of local situation and of spirit and enterprise, so preeminently qualified to derive from that intercourse every possible advantage. On such an occasion he might be permitted to express the gratification which he felt, in common with the great mass of the intelligent and liberal men of both countries, to see the animosities necessarily attendant on a state of hostility so rapidly wearing away, and giving place to feelings so much more consonant to the true interests of two nations united by a common language, a common spirit of commercial enterprise, and a common regard for well-regulated liberty. It appeared to him, that of two such states the relative position was not wholly unlike that which occasionally occurred in families; where a child having, perhaps, displeased a parent,—a daughter, for instance, in contracting a connexion offensive to that parent's feelings, some estrangement would, for a while, necessarily ensue; but, after a lapse of time, the irritation is forgotten, the force of blood again prevails, and the daughter and the mother stand

together against the world. That all causes of dissension may have now ceased for ever between two countries so strongly bound to each other, and with so clear a community of interests, he most sincerely hoped; and he trusted, that, in whatever part of the world Mr. Hughes might represent his country, he would feel, that in no part of it could that country's merits be more truly appreciated than in this.

END OF THE SPEECHES.

ADDRESSES

DURING THE

DIFFERENT ELECTIONS.

ELECTION OF 1812.

TO THE FREEMEN OF LIVERPOOL.

GENTLEMEN,

I HAD no sooner returned my acknowledgment of the very flattering invitation sent to me from Liverpool, than I felt it my duty to hasten hither for the purpose of paying my personal respects to the gentlemen by whom that invitation was signed, and to you.

I regret that distance and accidents have delayed my arrival here to so late an hour; most especially when I learn with what extraordinary and cordial demonstrations of kindness you were prepared to receive me this morning.

Finding, upon my arrival, the same unmerited partiality prevailing in my favour, which had dictated the requisition to me to offer myself as a candidate to represent this ancient and loyal town, I can no longer hesitate, in compliance

with that requisition, to offer to the freemen at large my humble but zealous services; and to express to them the pride and satisfaction which I should feel in being honoured by their suffrages with the high trust to which I have been encouraged to aspire.

I have no claims, Gentlemen, upon your confidence from private connexion or acquaintance: and, I confess, I am not fond of extravagant professions; because, I think, it often happens that when too much is professed at first, something is to be afterwards qualified, or explained, or retracted.

But my public life is before you: from that your judgment of me will naturally be formed. And I can confidently assure you, that, if you should think fit to honour me with your choice, you shall find me (according to the best of my ability) careful in watching over your peculiar concerns, and steadfast in maintaining those principles by which the prosperity of such a town as Liverpool is most surely to be upholden, connected as that prosperity must necessarily and inseparably be with the welfare and the honour of Great Britain.

I have the honour to be,

With the highest respect,

Gentlemen,

Your most obedient and devoted servant,

GEORGE CANNING.

TO THE WORTHY AND INDEPENDENT FREEMEN OF
LIVERPOOL.

Liverpool, October 21, 1812.

GENTLEMEN,

THE poll being now happily closed, and your choice of me confirmed by a majority (in itself, I am assured, great beyond example) of a larger number of freemen than ever before came forward to give their votes at an election for Liverpool, I have to offer you, with the most sincere and heart-felt delight, my acknowledgments and congratulations: my congratulations on the signal victory obtained by your ancient and unquestionable principles; my acknowledgments for your having selected me as the humble individual in whose name that victory should be won.

The triumph, Gentlemen, has been a triumph of principles, not of persons. Therefore, as it is, on the one hand, the more glorious and the more important, so is it, (as I hope,) on the other hand, less likely to be accompanied or followed by any of those unpleasant feelings or recollections which too often embitter election contests, and which carry the divisions of public sentiment into the recesses of private life.

Between my opponents and myself there has not been, during the whole of the conflict, one moment of anger, or one word of altercation. We were opposed to each other on public grounds; and we parted good friends when the contest was decided.

It will be a satisfaction to me to see, before I quit this town,—it is a satisfaction to me to have seen already,—all the temporary heats of the struggle fast subsiding, and likely soon to be forgotten.

Gentlemen, I hope I need not assure you, that the principles for which you have chosen me will remain the principles of my political life; and that they will be applied to the measures and circumstances upon which I may have to give an opinion, as your representative, in Parliament, according to the best of my judgment; unfettered by connexion with any subsisting party, or by attachment to any living leader. In the exercise of that judgment I shall, indeed, be aided by the fond and faithful remembrance of Mr. Pitt; from whose side, when living, I never was separated, whether in or out of office; and the recollection of whose opinion has, since his death, been, next to my own conscience, the most constant guide of my public conduct.

Gentlemen, in the worthy colleague whom you have been pleased to associate with me, I know I shall find that intimate acquaintance with your

local interests and wishes which will supply the defects of my inexperience on those subjects. I feel assured of his cordial co-operation, and he, and you, may rely upon my readiness to co-operate cordially with him in all your concerns.

With every sentiment of respect and of gratitude for a reception so distinguished, and a trust so honourably conferred, I remain, Gentlemen,

Your most obliged and

Devoted humble servant,

GEORGE CANNING.

ELECTION OF 1816.

TO THE FREEMEN OF LIVERPOOL.*Saltram, near Plymouth, May 27, 1816.*

GENTLEMEN,

MY arrival in England has been unavoidably delayed some weeks beyond the period at which I expected to have been able to resume my attendance in the House of Commons.

It was always my intention to repair to Liverpool, as soon as possible after my return, to thank you, in person, for the indulgence which your kindness has afforded me.

His Royal Highness the Prince Regent having been graciously pleased to appoint me to the office of President of the Board of Control, the trust which you so honourably confided to me is thereby returned into your hands; and it becomes my duty to solicit a renewal of it.

I hope to present myself to you very shortly after you receive this address; and it will be the highest gratification to me, if I shall have the

happiness to find that my acceptance of this mark of the confidence of the Crown has not impaired the confidence which you have done me the honour to repose in me.

I am, Gentlemen,

With the sincerest gratitude, respect, and regard,

Your obliged and faithful servant,

GEORGE CANNING.

TO THE FREEMEN OF LIVERPOOL.

GENTLEMEN,

I THANK you for the kind and cordial reception which I have had the honour and happiness to experience from you this day.

The repetition of those testimonies of good opinion and good will, which I have heretofore had so much occasion to acknowledge, satisfies me, that I shall not have solicited in vain a renewal of the trust which you have once, in so flattering a manner, confided to me.

That there should be persons who are desirous of separating us, cannot be surprising to any one who reflects upon the nature of the contest which

ended in returning me as your representative; but I cannot entertain the smallest apprehension of their success; while I have before my eyes such convincing proofs of your undiminished partiality, and of your unaltered attachment to the public principles in which alone that partiality originated.

I hope to meet you at the hustings on Friday morning; and I have the honour to be,

With the utmost respect and gratitude,

Gentlemen,

Your obliged and faithful servant,

GEORGE CANNING.

TO THE FREEMEN OF LIVERPOOL.

GENTLEMEN,

THE contest (if contest that may be called in which there was no avowed adversary to contend with) is at length happily terminated: and the record of your successful exertions in my favour, and in a cause peculiarly your own, exhibits the unexampled majority of 542.

In addition to the 1,280 freemen who had given their votes before twelve o'clock this day, I am informed, that hundreds more were anxiously pressing to the poll, whose services were rendered unnecessary; but of whose zeal I shall not retain a less grateful remembrance.

The haste which I made to present myself to you, Gentlemen, immediately on my arrival in England, has delayed the performance of other of my public duties.

I trust that this consideration will be accepted by you as an apology for my not remaining in Liverpool to tender to you my personal respects and acknowledgments.

I take leave of you with feelings more deeply impressed than I can describe, by the testimonies of your undiminished,—your augmented kindness.

I have the honour to be,
With the truest respect and gratitude,
Gentlemen,

Your obliged and faithful servant,

GEORGE CANNING.

ELECTION OF 1818.

TO THE WORTHY AND INDEPENDENT FREEMEN OF
LIVERPOOL.

London, June 10, 1818.

GENTLEMEN,

THE Parliament is dissolved, and the writs for a new Parliament are about to be issued immediately.

I lose no time, therefore, in conveying to the great body of my constituents the assurance, which I gave some weeks ago to those among them who did me the honour to call upon me for it, that my services are again at their command; and that I shall receive, with pride and acknowledgment, a renewal of the trust which they have twice so flatteringly confided to me.

I hope, Gentlemen, to pay my personal respects to you before the day of election; when I trust that I shall be met by you with unabated kindness.

To that kindness I presume not to put forward any other pretensions than a steadfast adherence to the principles which first recommended me to your choice, and a zeal for the particular interests and prosperity of your town, which has increased in proportion as I have become more acquainted with its inhabitants.

I have the honour to be,
 With the truest respect and attachment,
 Gentlemen,
 Your obliged and faithful servant,
 GEORGE CANNING.

TO THE WORTHY AND INDEPENDENT FREEMEN OF
 LIVERPOOL.

Hustings, June 25, 1818.—Half-past One o'Clock.

GENTLEMEN,

THE proclamation has just been read which finally closes the poll, and confirms me again your representative in Parliament.

Accept my warmest thanks for the zealous attachment which you have shown to me; an attachment to which, I know, I have no other claim

than what arises from my having maintained, constantly and strenuously, the public principles which first recommended me to your choice, and having discharged, I hope not unfaithfully, the duties which that choice imposed upon me.

I have the honour to be,

With the truest respect and acknowledgment,

Your obliged and faithful servant,

GEORGE CANNING.

ELECTION OF 1820.

TO THE WORTHY AND INDEPENDENT FREEMEN OF THE
ANCIENT AND LOYAL BOROUGH OF LIVERPOOL.

GENTLEMEN,

THE grief which, in common with every good subject, I feel for the loss of the best of Sovereigns, is accompanied, in my mind, with an apprehension of the inconveniences to which a dissolution of Parliament, after so short an interval, may possibly expose my constituents.

The signatures, however, of nearly nine hundred inhabitants (subscribed in less than two days) to an invitation such as I have had the gratification to receive from Liverpool, afford a decisive indication of the unabated good-will of my constituents, and of their desire that I should continue their representative.

I cannot hesitate to obey such a call.

When the day of nomination arrives, I shall present myself before you, with a fearlessness which results from having, to the best of my judgment and ability, faithfully discharged the trust

which you have thrice done me the honour to repose in me; and with a thankfulness inspired by the generous indulgence with which you have been uniformly pleased to receive my endeavours so to discharge it.

I am, Gentlemen,
 With the sincerest acknowledgment,
 Respect, and regard,
 Your obliged and faithful servant,
 GEORGE CANNING.

TO THE FREEMEN OF THE LOYAL AND INDEPENDENT
 TOWN OF LIVERPOOL.

GENTLEMEN,

THE contest was virtually terminated, almost as soon as it commenced, by the manifest and hopeless exhaustion of the votes of our opponents. I am happy to inform you, that the poll is now formally closed.

Your choice, never doubtful, is therefore now confirmed and ratified by law. And you are happily relieved from those vexatious interruptions of your business, and encroachments upon

your time, which, however laudably and cheerfully to be endured, when the great interests of the country require it, have, in this instance, been too long imposed upon you, without any intelligible object.

Again, Gentlemen, I have to thank you for the kindness and cordiality with which you have exerted yourselves to replace me in your service. And again I assure you of my constant endeavours to deserve them, by a perseverance in the same conduct, and an adherence to the same principles which first recommended me to your preference, and which have since cemented our connexion.

With the sincerest gratitude, respect, and attachment, I have the honour to subscribe myself
once more,

Gentlemen,

Your faithful servant,

GEORGE CANNING.

ON RESIGNING THE REPRESENTATION OF LIVERPOOL.

TO THE FREEMEN OF LIVERPOOL.

Foreign Office, January 23, 1823.

GENTLEMEN,

FOUR months' experience of the occupations of the department which the King has been graciously pleased to confide to me, combined with the anticipation of that increased pressure which the approaching session of Parliament will bring with it, forces upon me the reluctant conviction, that I should no longer be able to give to the important duties of a representative of Liverpool that degree of attention which would satisfy your just claims, and my own conscientious estimate of them.

After much hesitation, and with a feeling of deep regret, (for which, I know, you will give me credit,) I have thought it right to declare this conviction to you plainly and openly. It is far better, both for you and for me, that the failure, which I apprehend as too probable, should be prevented than remedied.

I surrender into your hands, therefore, a charge which, during the ten years that I have had the honour to hold it, I may presume to say, I have fulfilled with earnestness and fidelity; but in which I am, nevertheless, fully aware how much my endeavours have been aided by your encouragement; how many of my omissions have been overlooked by your indulgence; and how greatly my services (such as they were) have been overpaid by the repeated and increasing manifestations of your regard and good opinion.

You will not, I hope, find it difficult to provide a successor better qualified to serve you. Whoever may be the object of your choice, he may depend upon my co-operation on any occasion in which I can properly and usefully aid him; and you may be assured of the pleasure with which I shall avail myself of every such opportunity to testify my grateful remembrance of a connexion which has been the pride of my public life, and which nothing could have induced me, during the continuance of my public life, to relinquish, except a sense of duty, that forbids me to retain a trust, of which I cannot adequately discharge the obligations.

I have the honour to be, with the sincerest gratitude, respect, and attachment,

Gentlemen,

Your obliged and faithful servant,

GEORGE CANNING.

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX.

A VALUABLE Piece of Plate was presented to Mr. Canning, by his friends and constituents, on his expected departure from England to assume the Government of British India. The following description of it is extracted from the LIVERPOOL COURIER of March 19, 1823 :

“ It is a centre ornament, or candelabrum, forty-two inches high, and upwards of sixty in circumference at the base. It is silver gilt, and weighs upwards of one thousand ounces. The base is in the tripod form, and rests upon three tortoises. In the plinth are three compartments, six inches wide by two and a half high. The first compartment contains a view of the port of Liverpool. A ship under sail appears in the foreground of the picture, and in the background George’s Dock Pierhead, with St. Nicholas’s Church, the Town-hall, St. Paul’s, St. George’s, and St. Thomas’s Churches in the distance. The

second compartment contains a representation of a section of the Town-hall. The scene chosen is that of an election. Hustings are erected in the front: bars for several candidates are open: a crowd of spectators is congregated before them; and a coach, filled with voters in the interest of Mr. Canning, accompanied with music and flags, the latter having inscribed on them, ‘*The British Constitution,*’ ‘*The Friend of the Pilot that weather’d the Storm,*’ ‘*Canning for ever!*’ &c., is represented in the act of approaching his bar. The right honourable gentleman appears in the centre, surrounded by his friends, in the act of addressing the multitude of spectators, some of whom are elevated upon the hustings, loudly cheering their favourite candidate. The ‘*State of the Poll*’ appears on the side of Mr. Canning’s bar; and, in the distance, the lofty buildings on the north side of Dale-street are seen, their windows and roofs crowded with spectators surveying the animated scene beneath. The third compartment exhibits a view of the interior of the House of Commons, the theatre in which Mr. Canning so often displays his great and unrivalled talents. The Speaker is in the chair: the mace is on the table before him: the benches are crowded with members; and Mr. Canning is represented as standing on the floor, in the act of addressing the chair. The base of the pedestal represents a coral rock. Upon it, at the angles,

are seated three beautiful classic figures, under palm-tree leaves. The first figure is emblematical of SCIENCE. In her hand she holds a book, written in Oriental characters, which she is in the act of perusing. At her feet are spread a variety of appropriate scientific instruments and symbols. The second figure is a personification of NAVIGATION. The compass rests upon her knee; and in her hand she holds the log-line and lead. On the right, at her feet, a staff, with a union jack on it, an anchor and cable, a rudder, a capstern, and other nautical emblems are appropriately disposed: on the right, a buoy. COMMERCE is the third figure. She holds in her right hand a laurel crown, and in her left a palm branch, emblematic of the peace and harmony which commercial intercourse creates amongst the different nations of the globe. Various appropriate symbols are displayed at her feet also. On the right appear a bale of goods and other articles of commercial traffic: on the left, a cornucopia, or horn of plenty, the caduceus, &c. &c. These three personifications of the Genius of Science, of Navigation, and of Commerce are exquisitely beautiful. The figures are most chastely executed, and the drapery is well disposed. They are amongst the most prominent excellences of the design. On the pedestal, between these figures, are three tablets. The first tablet exhibits the arms of the borough of

Liverpool, tastefully executed. The next displays Mr. Canning's Arms, richly embossed, with the motto—*Ne cede malis sed contra*. The third contains the inscription, very neatly executed, on a flat gold field, in raised bright letters. It is as follows:

‘ PRESENTED
TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE
GEORGE CANNING,
BY A NUMEROUS BODY OF HIS FRIENDS,
FREEMEN AND INHABITANTS OF
LIVERPOOL,
ON HIS BEING APPOINTED GOVERNOR-GENERAL OF INDIA,
JULY, 1822,
IN GRATEFUL ACKNOWLEDGMENT
OF HIS ZEALOUS AND IMPARTIAL ATTENTION
TO THE INTERESTS OF ALL HIS CONSTITUENTS,
FOR A PERIOD OF TEN YEARS,
IN THE COURSE OF WHICH
HE HAS BEEN FOUR TIMES ELECTED
THEIR REPRESENTATIVE IN PARLIAMENT;
AND IN TESTIMONY OF THEIR RESPECT,
AS WELL FOR HIS PRIVATE VIRTUES
AS FOR HIS DISINTERESTED AND INDEPENDENT
PUBLICK CONDUCT;
AND OF THEIR ADMIRATION
OF THOSE TRANSCENDENT TALENTS,
AS A STATESMAN AND AN ORATOR,
WITH WHICH HE HAS UNIFORMLY AND FEARLESSLY
MAINTAINED THE TRUE PRINCIPLES OF
THE BRITISH CONSTITUTION.’

“ A handsome fluted naval column springs from the pedestal. Its base is begirt with a cable; and three dolphins are represented disporting themselves at the angles. On the upper part of the column, and surrounding it, are inscribed, ‘ Election of 1812,’ ‘ Election of 1816,’ ‘ Election of 1818,’ ‘ Election of 1820;’ the four periods at which Mr. Canning was returned to Parliament as representative of Liverpool. Above these inscriptions appear the prows of three ships, with figure-heads; the first representing a native of Asia, the second of Africa, and the third of America. The capital of the column is beautifully chaste. From it issue acanthus leaves; attached to which are branches for nine lights. The summit of the whole is crowned by a beautiful classic figure, emblematic of the Genius of Liverpool, her right hand resting on a ship’s rudder, and her left on a broad and glittering shield, on which is depicted the fabulous bird, the LIVER. On her head she wears a mural crown; and her drapery falls in simple elegance over her finely proportioned form.

“ As a work of art, this splendid piece of plate is decidedly of the first class: superior, in our opinion, to any modern composition, of a similar kind, which we have seen. There is an unity and elegance in the design, equalled only by the exquisite manner in which its various parts are

finished. The work reflects the highest credit on Mr. Chantry, the designer, as well as on Messrs. Rundle and Bridge and the various artists whom they have employed in executing this beautiful specimen of British genius and skill.

“ To the feelings of Mr. Canning and his family it must be highly gratifying. Rarely, indeed, in the representative history of England, have the services of a representative been rewarded with such a mark of public approbation. The intrinsic value of the plate is of little consideration. The proofs of affection and esteem which such gifts embody, give to them a value more durable than the perishable materials of which they are composed. In the present instance, the design silently, but eloquently, relates, in epitome, the history of Mr. Canning’s public connexion with Liverpool, from its commencement, in the year 1812, until the period of his intended departure for India. And it will tell to his latest posterity the respect and admiration in which his character, and talents were held by the inhabitants of this great commercial community. Nor is it less gratifying to the feelings of the subscribers. It is a small, but sincere, token of the high respect which they entertain for Mr. Canning; of their gratitude for the services which he has rendered to Liverpool; of their admiration of his talents as a statesman and an orator ;

and of their deep regret at the prospect of parting with so gifted an individual. Above all, it will perpetuate those great political principles which first recommended Mr. Canning to their notice, and of which he has, on all occasions, been the eloquent and fearless defender.”

THE END.





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